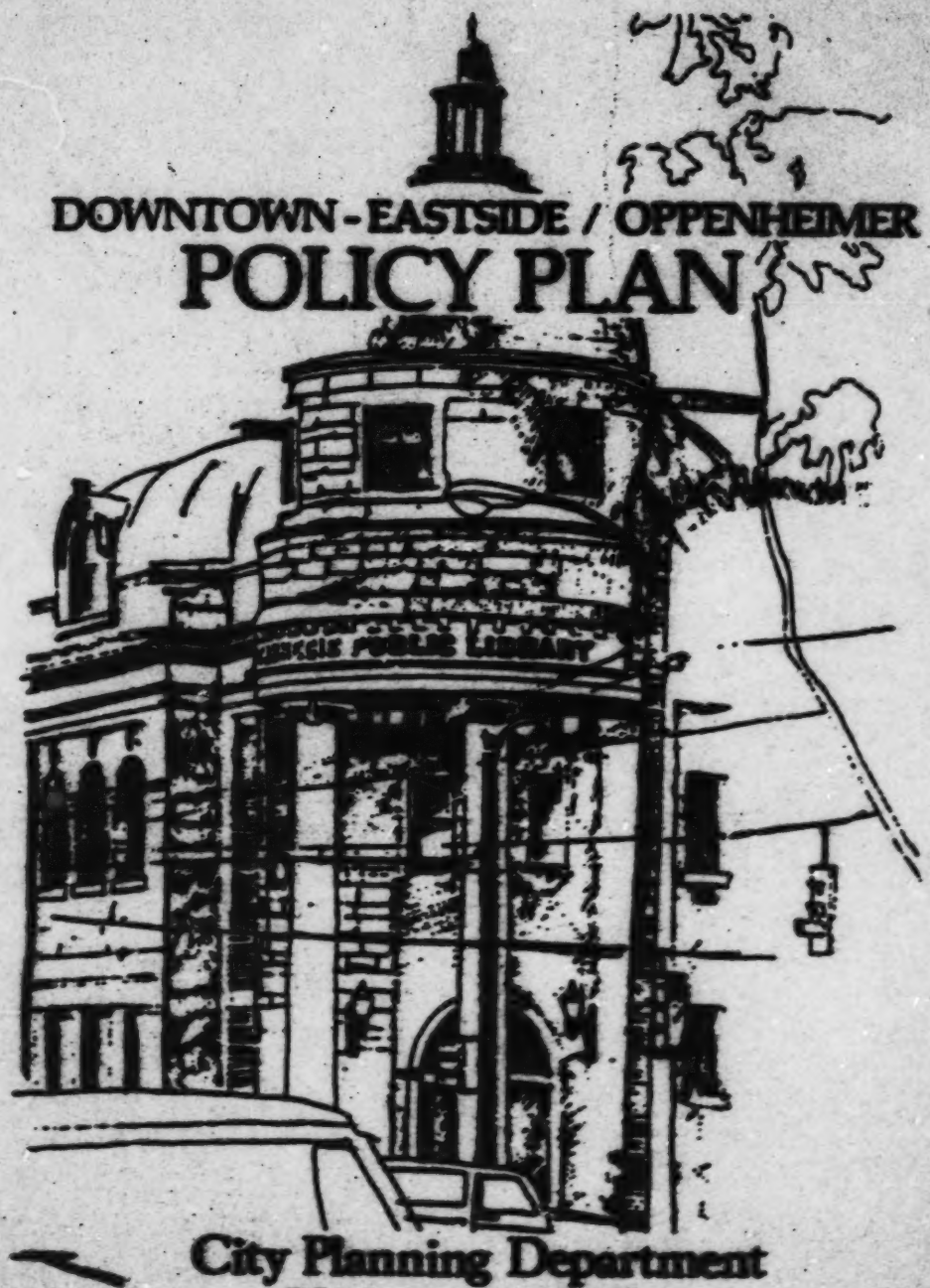
DOWNTOWN - EASTSIDE / OPPENHEIMER
POLICY PLAN



City Planning Department
Vancouver, B.C.
April 1982

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PREFACE

On February 3, 1981, Vancouver City Council adopted the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan, with some amendments. (See Appendix II for extract from Council Minutes.) The following document has been revised to include these amendments. The Director of Planning was instructed to submit a proposed Official Development Plan directly to Public Hearing, to implement those policies concerning land use and development. Other Implementation Statements contained in this Policy Plan were referred to various appropriate Civic Departments and Boards for action as specified.

On October 1, 1981, at the Public Hearing to consider the proposed Official Development Plan, Council deferred approval pending further report from the Planning Department on several issues. The Planning Department report was considered on January 5, 1982 and Council made several changes to the proposed Official Development Plan. (See Appendix III for extracts from the Council Minutes.) The amended Official Development Plan was enacted by Council on April 20, 1982.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1975 City Council approved the initiation of a Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP) for the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area. Council also changed the zoning from a primarily industrial and commercial designation to a Comprehensive Development District (CD-1). The new zoning emphasized the retention of existing residential uses and also new residential development. These actions were taken to stabilize the area primarily for the area residents. These actions were the beginning of a longer process to halt the decline of this area of the City and to improve and add to the many good aspects which exist.

Over the past 5 years City staff, working with the Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee, have planned and developed a number of capital improvements funded from the $800,000 NIP allocation. Also, there has been a comprehensive review of the whole range of issues and existing policies which affect the area. This review has included a thorough analysis of the many different possible futures for the area.

The result of this effort is recorded in this document, the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan. This Policy Plan has been prepared by the City Planning Department, working in conjunction with the other civic departments, and with the assistance of the Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee, whose views have been considered as have the views of other community groups and individuals.

The Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan is part of an incremental process that gradually reduces and resolves areas of conflict and provides direction for the future. It treats the area's social, physical, historical and economic issues as an interacting system, and it provides a context within which both public and private decisions can be made.

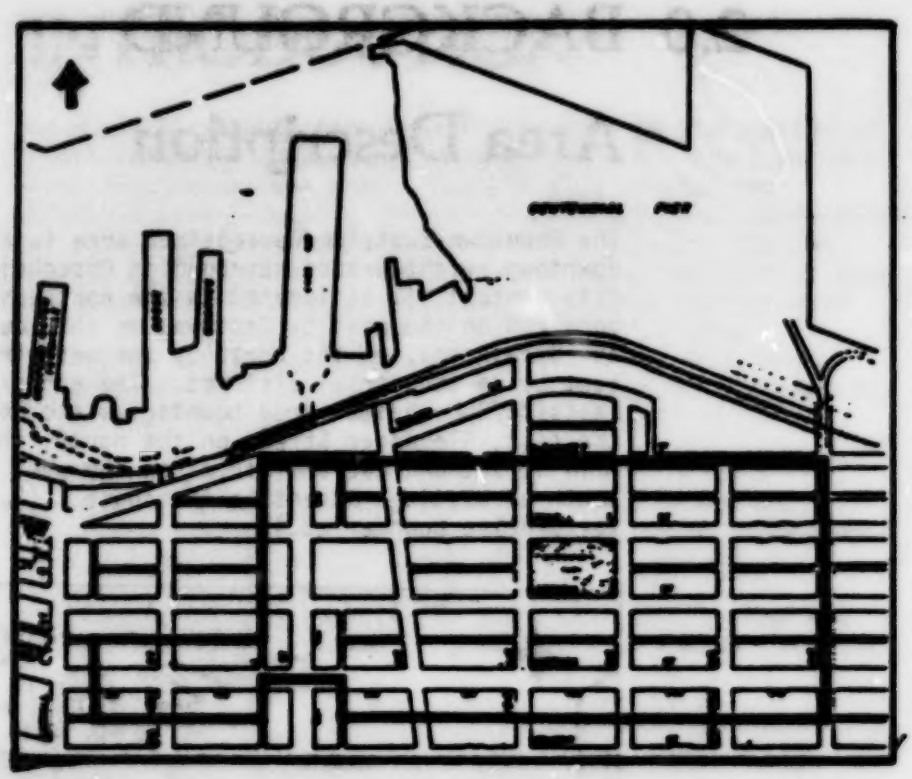
2.0 BACKGROUND

Area Description

The Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area is a small mixed use downtown neighbourhood surrounding Oppenheimer Park. In the City context, it is located in the northeast sector and is bordered on the west by Gastown, on the south by Chinatown and Strathcona, on the north by the waterfront and on the east by an industrial district. The approximate Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area boundaries are Heatley Street on the east, Alexander Street on the north, the lane west of Main Street and Carrall Street on the west and the lane south of Hastings Street on the south. (See map on page 4 for precise boundaries.)

DOWNTOWN-EASTSIDE/OPPENHEIMER
City Context

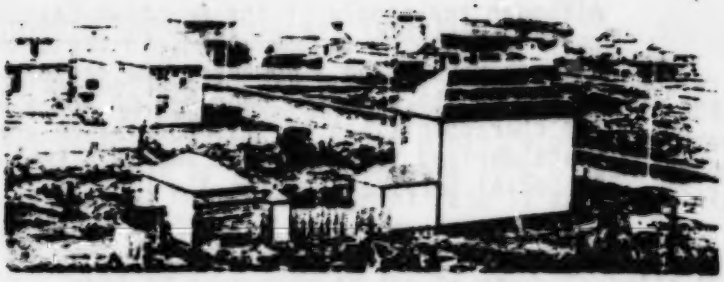
This neighbourhood contains a wide variety of land uses concentrated in a small 21-block area. Because of its historical evolution, land uses such as industrial, residential, commercial, and institutional exist side by side with varying degrees of compatibility. Some concentration of uses can be seen in the clustering of retail and commercial uses with residential uses above grade along Hastings, Main and Powell Streets, institutional and residential uses along Cordova Street and industrial uses on Alexander Street. However, the general impression that the area generates is one of land use variety and diversity.



DOWNTOWN-EASTSIDE/OPPENHEIMER
Specific Boundaries of Area Covered by this Policy Plan

History

The Oppenheimer area is one of the oldest and most culturally diverse areas of the City. In 1867 Stamp's Mill (later known as Hastings Mill) was founded by Captain Edward Stamp on a spit of land at the foot of Dunlevy Street. Later that same year, Captain "Gassy" Jack Deighton opened a saloon to serve the mill workers, half a mile away, in what is now Gastown. By the 1880's a sizeable community had settled in the area, with its own post office and school. Alexander Street (named after Richard H. Alexander, manager of the Hastings Mill) became the most desirable residential location for well-to-do families. The area's first church, St. James Anglican, was built in 1880 and the first hospital and school for nurses, known as St. Luke's Home was built in 1888. The Main and Hastings Street intersection gained prominence at this time with the construction of a Market Hall in 1889 which was the City Hall from 1896 to 1929, and the Carnegie Library built in 1903 to serve as a public library. The newly renovated Carnegie Centre now functions as a community centre.



Powell Street Grounds (now Oppenheimer Park), corner of Dunlevy and Powell Streets, 1887 (Photo: Vancouver City Archives).

By the turn of the century, business interests moved further west and the prominent families followed to settle in the West End. The Oppenheimer Area now became the home of immigrant and working class families and single men. Many of the neighbourhood's hotels and rooming houses were built at this time to house the working population, in addition to the single-family wood frame houses for the more affluent workers along Cordova Street. The Japanese community began to move into the area around Oppenheimer Park (then known as the Powell Street Grounds) at this time, while the Chinese population settled further south in Strahtcona. During this period, the 500 and 600 blocks of Alexander Street were inhabited mainly by single women in what was known as a "red light district".

By 1930 the Oppenheimer area was settled almost entirely by Japanese people and became known as "Japantown". However, by the early 1940's, two events occurred which has a profound effect on the subsequent development of the neighbourhood. The first was the evacuation of the Japanese-Canadian residents to internment areas outside the City during World War II and the second was the zoning of the area for heavy industrial uses. A period began in which industrial and institutional uses expanded while the remaining housing was allowed to run down. After the war, few Japanese people returned to live in the area, although some Japanese retail stores and businesses were re-established along Powell Street, and the Japanese Language School and Buddhist Temple were re-activated.

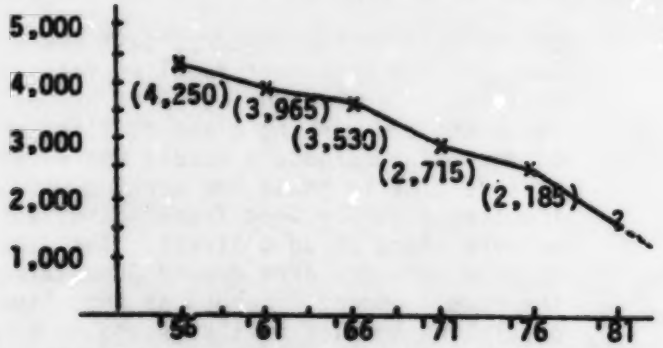
During the 1950's and 1960's and early 1970's, redevelopment continued at an accelerated pace but was concentrated primarily along Main Street with the construction of the Court House, Police Safety Building and Firehall and the area east of Jackson, where new industrial and commercial buildings were constructed.

Social Profile

Although the people of the Downtown-Eastside present a "skid road" stereotype to the world, in fact, they represent a diverse population. However, the factors that they all have in common are poverty, poor health and a lack of family ties. The characteristics of this population are discussed below. (Data derived from the 1971 and 1976 Census and data provided by Social Service agencies.)

Size of Resident Population

The population of the Downtown-Eastside is currently 2,185 and has been declining since 1956. The population declined by 44% from 1961 to 1976 and 21% from 1971 to 1976.



The cause of this steady loss of population can be attributed to the following factors. Changes in the operation of the primary industries such as logging, mining and fishing have reduced the seasonal flow of workers into the neighbourhood. Higher rates of social assistance, unemployment insurance benefits and pensions have offered residents the opportunity to move to higher rent areas. The redevelopment of portions of the area with large institutional uses has reduced the available housing stock as has the closure of hotels and rooming houses for non-compliance with City health, fire and building by-laws.

Age, Sex and Marital Status

The Downtown-Eastside is characterized by the predominance of an elderly population, with 35% of residents over the age of 65, compared to 14% over 65 for Vancouver as a whole.

Indeed the majority of the population (68%) is over the age of 45 years. Children under 14 years constitute only 6% as a whole, where children under 14 years comprise 16% of the total population. The proportion of women in the Downtown-Eastside is only 15%, a much lower rate than 51% in the City.

The majority (65%) of residents are single, widowed or divorced, a much higher rate of single status than the 38% for the City of Vancouver.

Income, Unemployment and Education

Three-quarters of the population (or 1,600 people) had incomes of less than $3,000 a year compared to 36% in Vancouver. According to the Ministry of Human Resources, 1,700 people or 78% receive some form of pension or social assistance. The unemployment rate is approximately 38%, compared to 11% in Vancouver.

The level of education in the Downtown-Eastside is low. About 58% of the population has less than elementary education, compared to 33% in Vancouver, and only 5% have attended university, compared to 15% in Vancouver.

Ethnicity

The population of the Downtown-Eastside is ethnically mixed, with residents of British origin (36%) and Chinese origin (29%) forming the dominant groups. In Vancouver, the proportion of British is 53% and Chinese is 7%. Although the Japanese resident population is only about 3% of the total, the Japanese presence is evident in the many Japanese retail stores and the location of two major Japanese cultural facilities in the neighbourhood. The Native Indian population presents a very high profile in the area, but there are indications that only a small proportion of Native Indians in the City actually live in the Downtown-Eastside.

Length of Residence

Contrary to the stereotype of a transient, shifting population, the residents of the Downtown-Eastside form a stable community, with an average length of residence in the neighbourhood of 13 years; however, people do move from room to room or hotel to hotel in search of better or cheaper accommodation.

At the same time, the area attracts transients because it offers inexpensive housing, a downtown location, pubs and a tolerance for eccentricity. The number of transients varies with the unemployment rate and with Welfare and Unemployment Insurance policies. At any one time, there are an estimated 300 transients in the Downtown-Eastside.

Handicapped Population

The estimate of the number of people with physical, emotional or psychiatric handicaps is approximately 800, but may be much higher.

A "hard to house" population is estimated to comprise 10% of the resident population or 200 persons. Characteristics of the 'hard to house" include mental instability, psychiatric disorders, drug and alcohol abuse, and violence to self or others. Their often socially disruptive behaviour makes them unacceptable tenants of the average hotel or rooming house.

Population Trends

A variety of trends have an impact on the composition, size and character of the Downtown-Eastide population. Changes in national and provincial social assistance payments, rates of unemployment, City housing policies that affect the condition and supply of housing stock, and zoning by-laws that control development, affect the nature of the area population.

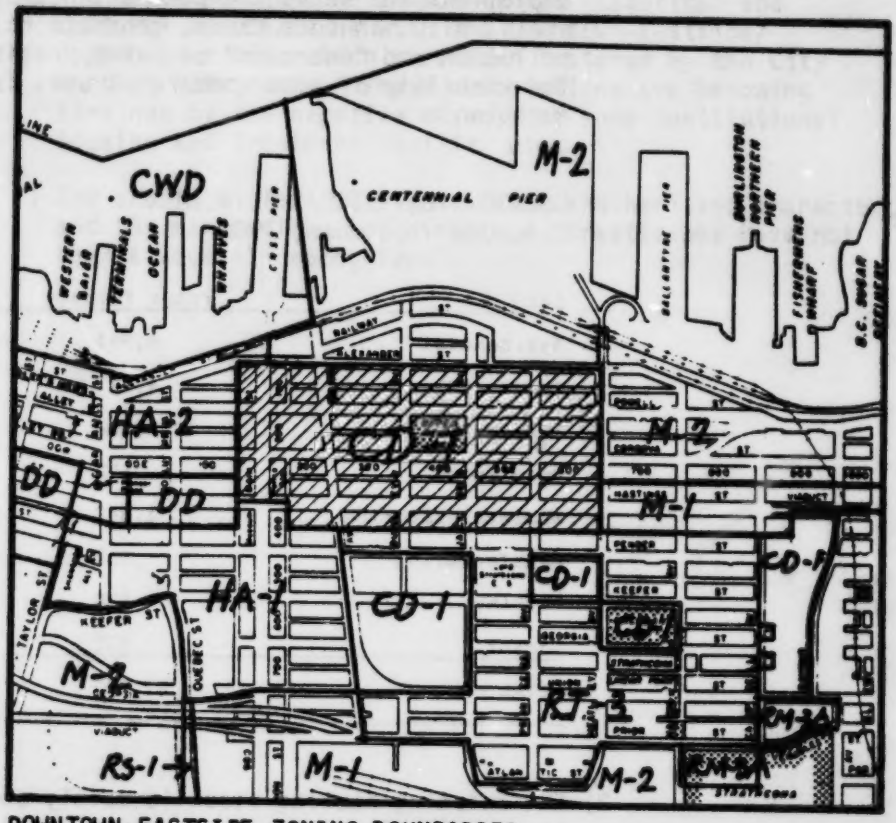
There are indications that the Downtown-Eastside will continue to attract a low income, unattached population, that has difficulty fitting into society's norms and which seeks out inexpensive housing, appropriate social services, a downtown location and a tolerant social climate. The age, sex and ethnic composition of the population may change, but it will continue to have these economic and social characteristics.

If the current trend toward a net population decline continues, the area will lose approximately 100 persons a year. However, the recently completed improvements to social and recreational facilities funded by the Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP) and the City-funded Carnegie Centre, coupled with a stepped up program of City-sponsored by-law enforcement, housing rehabilitation and new construction, may have the effect of halting or even reversing this trend.

Planning Context and Issues

On October 17, 1975, City Council decided to revitalize and strengthen the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area as a residential neighbourhood and designated a portion of it for a Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP), and its companion Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP). The total capital allocation has been $803,210.00, cost-shared by the City, Provincial and Federal governments.

In order to meet the eligibility requirement for NIP, that the area be predominantly residential, and stable in terms of land use and densities, Council rezoned the area from an industrial and commercial zoning district to a Comprehensive Development District (CD-1) permitting a variety of residential uses, but severely constraining the development of new industrial and commercial uses.



DOWNTOWN-EASTSIDE ZONING BOUNDARIES

With the assistance of the Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee, composed of representatives of the area residential, industrial, retail and ethnic interests, the City Planning Department prepared a NIP Concept Plan. This Concept Plan allocated NIP funds to the improvement of health care facilities, public open space, Japanese community facilities and social-recreational facilities. The Concept Plan was adopted by Council on September 28, 1976; implementation is nearly complete.

In addition to developing and carrying out a capital upgrading effort using NIP funds, the City Planning Department in consultation with local citizens, reconsidered the many problems and opportunities in the area, and identified the following planning issues:

1) The diversity of land uses located in a very close proximity generates land use conflicts that require resolution. Residential land uses - the intended predominant use for the area - are threatened by the expansion of industrial, commercial and institutional uses and by deterioration of the existing housing stock. Existing industrial uses, many of which provide needed employment and serve the port and nearby commercial areas, also, in some cases, generate noise and other pollution and "encroach" on nearby residential uses. The viability of some commercial uses is also in question.

DOWNTOWN-EASTSIDE/OPPENHEIMER
Land Use - October, 1980

Land Use	Front Footage	Percentage
Residential	4,792	28
Commercial	4,617	27
Institutions	2,632	15
Open Space	800	5
Wholesale/Storage	1,847	11
Manufacturing	912	5
Parking	670	4
Vacant	925	5
TOTAL	17,195	100

2) The existing housing stock is mainly composed of lodging house units in very old and deteriorating buildings. There is a need to rehabilitate existing units and develop new housing.

3) Traffic flowing through the area on these high volume arterial roads creates negative impacts of noise, air pollution and danger. The adjacent Downtown, with a high proportion of commercial retail and office uses, and the Chinatown and Gastown Historic Areas, contribute towards this traffic problem, and further, creates persistent parking difficulties.

4) The residents of this area are, as noted in the Social Profile, mostly elderly, single and low-income. Both public and privately-sponsored social and recreational services exist in the area, but there is a continuing need to orient the services to the specific needs of the various resident population sub-groups. Much of the leisure time of the residents is spent walking around the neighbourhood, which points to a need to improve open space amenities.

5) There are a disproportionate number of institutions, social service agencies and public authority uses in this area, many of which do not relate at all or relate to a much larger geographic area. The neighbourhood contains a high proportion of liquor establishments, and partially related to this, a high street crime rate.

6) The Japanese-Canadian community has historical and cultural associations with the Downtown-Eastside/ Oppenheimer area which have been fostered by the City through NIP grants. These associations are becoming strained by the negative effects of some institutional housing and treatment facility uses.

7) The area's historical significance and heritage character, and the many unique buildings and streetscapes have not been adequately recognized.

3.0 GOALS

A set of goals has been established to form the basis for the planning and development of the Downtown-Eastside/ Oppenheimer area. These goals reflect a consideration of the values and desires of the many diverse interest groups who live and work in the area, and of those who own property there. They also reflect a consideration of these local interests within a broader, City-wide perspective.

The goals address the area's social, physical, historical and economic issues as an interacting system. They provide a direction for change, and a context within which both public and private decisions can be made.

Generally, this Plan is intended to further stabilize the residential uses and continue the community upgrading effort begun with the Neighbourhood Improvement and Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Programs. This Plan will also provide for a more compatible mixture of land uses, primarily through the emphasis of sub-areas. More specifically, the goals for the Downtown-Eastside/ Oppenheimer area are:

Housing

1) Retain existing and provide new affordable housing for the population of the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area.

2) Upgrade the quality of the existing housing stock to City standards.

3) Increase the proportion of self-contained dwelling units, through rehabilitation and new construction.

Commercial Uses

4) Improve the viability of commercial activity by encouraging the upgrading of existing commercial uses and the development of new commercial uses which serve both local residents and the large and growing working population in the area.

Industrial Uses

5) Retain existing industries and establish co-operative, positive liaison with industrial firms with a view to encouraging as high a standard of physical maintenance and general amenity, compatible with residential and other nearby uses, and consistent with operational validity.

6) Encourage new industries which are compatible with the mixed-use character of the area.

Non-Conforming Uses and Buildings

7) Reduce the negative effects of non-conforming uses and buildings, and phase them out over the long term.

Public Open Space/Views

8) Increase the amount of public open space and provide more outdoor recreation opportunities.

9) Enhance the public enjoyment of the waterfront and views to the North Shore and mountains.

Community Services/Facilities

10) Provide preventive health care and treatment services that meet the specialized neighbourhood needs.

11) Increase the level of public safety for residents, workers and visitors to the area.

12) Curtail the availability of alcoholic beverages, in view of the intimate connection between alcohol and violence in this area.

13) Encourage the provision of indoor recreation services.

14) Prohibit institutional uses and social service facilities which do not serve the immediate needs of the neighbourhood population.

Traffic, Transportation and Parking

15) Ensure a pattern of traffic movement within, through, and adjacent to the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area that improves the character, pedestrian safety and quality of life in the area.

16) Encourage greater use of public transit by workers and local shoppers from outlying areas.

17) Discourage commuter parking.

Japanese-Canadian Community

18) Recognize the cultural contribution of the Japanese-Canadian community to the City of Vancouver and reinforce their historic identification with the Oppenheimer area.

Heritage Conservation

19. Preserve and enhance the heritage character of the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area and recognize its historical significance in the evolution of Vancouver.

Community Involvement

20. Ensure that Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area residents, property owners, merchants, and workers are consulted on local planning and development matters and on the implementation of capital improvement projects.

4.0 POLICIES

The policies in this section are based upon the goals listed in Section 3.0 and provide more specific guidance with respect to the general development of the Downtown-Eastisde/ Oppenheimer District regarding:

- **4.1 Housing**
- **4.2 Commercial Uses**
- **4.3 Industrial Uses**
- **4.4 Non-conforming Uses and Buildings**
- **4.5 Public Open Space and Views**
- **4.6 Community Services and Facilities**
  - **Health Care Services**
  - **Public Safety**
  - **Recreation Services**
  - **Institutions/Social Service Agencies**
- **4.7 Traffic, Transportation and Parking**
- **4.8 Japanese-Canadian community**
- **4.9 Heritage Conservation**
- **4.10 Community Involvement**

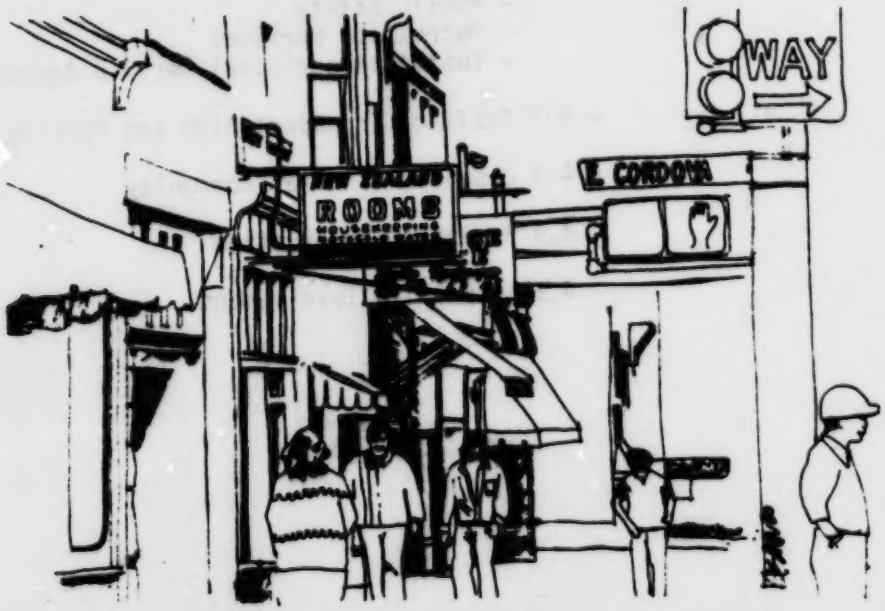
4.1 Housing

Discussion

Housing Stock

There are approximately 1,800 lodging house units in the Downtown-Eastside NIP area, which represents 92% of all units. Many (about 30%) of these units, which are mainly sleeping rooms and housekeeping units, are considered to be seriously substandard. The Downtown-Eastside Housing Needs Study, August 1978, prepared by civic staff, found almost 10,000 Fire and Lodging House By-law violations in the 23 hotels in their sample survey.

Single sleeping rooms, without cooking or washroom facilities comprise 72% of all housing units, and housekeeping rooms containing light cooking, but no washroom facilities comprise 20% of housing units. Only an estimated 25% of the housing stock is considered adequate and this includes the 462 units of government subsidized new hostel housing.



Main Street, between East Cordova and Powell: Most of the upper floors of buildings are single sleeping rooms.

The vacancy rate has increased over the last couple of years to stand at the current annual level of 35%. The rate fluctuates from a summer high of 40% to a winter low of 23%.

Housing Characteristics and Costs

The majority (83%) of Downtown-Eastside residents live in sleeping or housekeeping rooms which have a floor area of less than 100 square feet. Many of these rooms (1/4 to 1/3)are located on light wells that provide substandard levels of light and ventilation.

Approximately 95% of residents are tenants whose rents vary between $60 and $130 a month depending on size and condition of the unit. Since the majority of residents receive incomes of less than $300 per month, the average rent paid of $90, suggests that most residents pay a disproportionate amount (30% to 50%) of their income to rent.

Housing Location

In the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Area, housing is located throughout the area. On Main, Hastings and Powell Streets, housing units are generally located on upper floors of hotels and rooming houses with retail or commercial uses at ground level. Cordova Street has the largest concentration of residential uses, with an intact enclave of turn-of-the-century single-family houses and two social housing developments, Oppenheimer and Antoinette Lodges. In spite of its industrial character, Alexander Street contains several clusters of rooming houses and the government-assisted Rodden Lodge.

Downtown Housing Implementation Committee

In October 1978 Council established the Downtown Housing Implementation Committee, consisting of senior staff from the Social Planning, City Planning, Fire, Health and Permits & Licences Departments whose task was to co-ordinate the inspection and by-law enforcement program to develop and implement a housing policy for hotels and rooming houses in the Downtown. The Committee has prepared three quarterly reports to Council which have recommended, among other things, that:

a) A new "Standards of Maintenance for Older Buildings" by-law be developed and that the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program be improved and extended in order to facilitate the rehabilitation of housing units;

b) That the City encourage the construction of 100 new bachelor units a year in the Downtown core;

c) That the inspection and enforcement of City by-laws in the Downtown core be stepped up with a view to closing the worst housing units; and

d) That amendments be made to the Zoning and Development By-law to increase the minimum unit size of sleeping and housekeeping units and to ensure adequate setback for new development adjacent to existing buildings with perimeter light wells.

The Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) has assisted landlords in upgrading some of the area rooming houses.

Social Housing Strategy

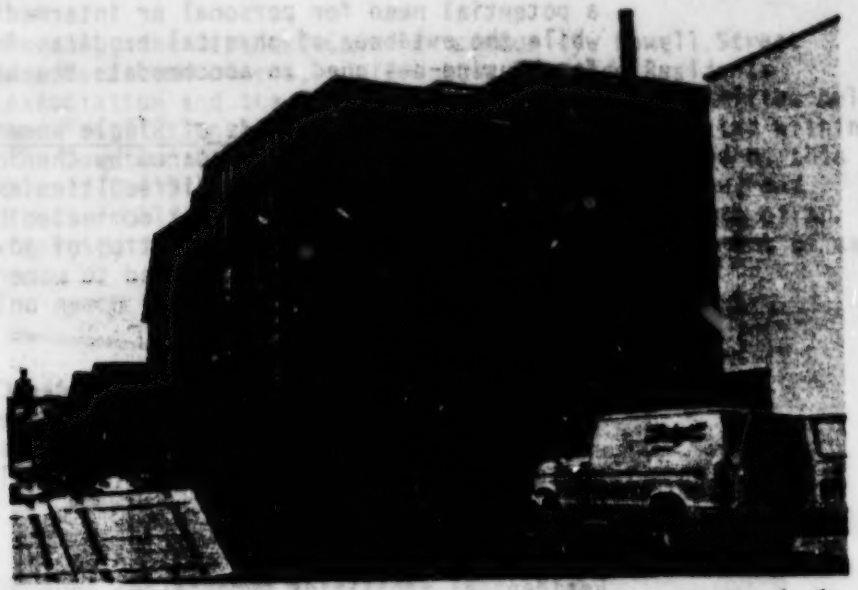
On March 4, 1980 City Council approved A Social Housing Strategy for the City of Vancouver. Several of the recommendations adopted have particular relevance to the Downtown-Eastside:

a) That the target of 100 new self-contained dwelling units annually in the Downtown Core be reaffirmed;

b) That senior governments formulate an income maintenance shelter allowance program to assist households unable to afford adequate housing;

c) That the Provincial Government assume a more active role in the provision of rental housing by participating in rent supplement programs for units provided under the Federal Government Low Income Housing Program;

d) That the Provincial Government review SAFER (Shelter Allowance for Elderly Renters) levels and extend the benefits to persons 60 years of age or older.



Rodden Lodge, located at the corner of Alexander and Dunlevy Streets, is the most recently-built social housing development in the area.

The implementation of the recommendations of the Downtown Housing Implementation Committee and Social Housing Strategy for the City of Vancouver will further the goal of improving housing in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area. With specific reference to the 100-unit annual target, because of Council's concerted efforts to stabilize and upgrade the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area for residential use, it would be most appropriate if many if not most of these units were built there. To do this, however, may be difficult because of the lack of vacant city-owned land there, and the absence of an adequate capital or operating subsidy which would make the rents of new housing affordable for local tenants. Nevertheless, the need for new housing has already been acknowledged by Council; this Plan suggests the resources, both financial and civic staff effort, be focussed on the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area.

With the 800 additional social housing units approved for Vancouver on December 12, 1980 by the Hon. Paul Cosgrove, Minister responsible for C.M.H.C., the members of Council when considering this Policy Plan, agreed that the plan should be amended to reflect an annual target of 600 social housing units in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area.

Special Needs Residential Facilities

The Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer population contains a diversity of people, many of whom have specialized needs for housing. The high proportion of the elderly indicates

a potential need for personal or intermediate care housing while the evidence of physical handicap indicates a need for housing designed to accommodate the handicapped.

The Study on Housing Needs of Single Women in the Downtown-Eastside, January 1980, prepared by the Society of Women's Residences, points out the difficulties experienced by women in a housing environment dominated by men. The study recommends that a higher proportion of government managed housing stock should be allocated to women, and that additional small scale housing for women only should be developed.

The Hard to House report prepared by the City Health Department recommends that special housing be developed for the 10% of the population who are hard to house. The housing would provide 24-hour supervision, medical and psychiatric health care, and counselling.

In October 1979, City Council adopted The Special Needs Residential Facilities Report (see Appendix I) which defines these types of facilities and includes guidelines for their location, size and operation throughout the City, including the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area. Guideline (ii) states that "for Special Needs Residential Facilities intended to house persons with behavioural problems which may be disruptive to the neighbourhood, more restrictive limitations may be placed on capacity and location in relation to other facilities." And further, Guideline (vi) states that "in determining the suitability of a location for a Special Needs Residential Facility, its relationship with other uses and community facilities in a neighbourhood shall be considered." All the guidelines apply, but these two have particular reference to the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer context.

A point is often made that certain types of "institutional housing" are needed in the area because of an existing demand as evidenced by the number of people who use the services of the established social service agencies. However, there is also evidence that people are attracted to the area or are directed to it because of the existing institutional housing and agencies that cater to the needs of the psychiatrically disturbed, the alcoholic and the homeless. Although there is no doubt that the residents of the area require the care and services of an aging population, it is also clear that the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area is categorized by many as an institutional enclave for the disturbed or socially disfunctional population.

It is most important to the direction of the future growth of this area for a policy decision to be made regarding the development of new institutional housing in this area. While recognizing that the need exists for specialized institutional

housing, the Japanese-Canadian community, Powell Street merchants and owners, the Downtown-Eastside Residents Association and the Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee believe new institutional housing uses should not be located within the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area, as defined by this Plan. The Director of Planning supports this view, and further believes there is a need to halt the growth of an "institutional ghetto" by encouraging the development of self-

The Victory House is a City-owned building leased in 1977 to the St. James Social Service Society for 23 years.

contained housing to encourage self-reliance and lessen dependence on social services. If new Special Needs Residential Facilities are required in the future for existing local residents, they should be considered for a nearby location, but not within the boundaries of this area as defined by this Plan.

Residential Uses and the Zoning By-law

The current CD-1 By-law, which applies to the NIP designated area, permits all types of residential uses throughout the area. Further, it contains a provision which requires that 50% of the total additional floor space above ground floor retail, office or other commercial space consist of dwelling units or otherwise serve the immediate needs of the local residents. In the five years this CD-1 By-law has been in effect, some, but only very few, new housing units have been developed within this area. The most significant development has been the 60+ Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation units to be built as part of the new health clinic on Cordova Street. This provision, however, has not very effectively promoted the original objective

of increasing the housing stock. The two blocks of Hastings west of Main Street are currently zoned Downtown District (DD), which permits a total floor space ratio density of 5.0, but only up to 3.0 for residential uses. There have been no new residential uses under this particular provision.

The reasons for almost no new housing units in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area are many, but actually are not very complex. The area image is poor, even though in recent years significant improvements have been made. Many of the potential "consumers" of new units are people who already live in the area who are looking to move out of existing substandard accommodation. Most of these people are very low income and would find it impossible to pay market rents. People who do not now live in the area who could pay market rents have shown no interest to date in relocating to the area. Therefore, this "demand" for new units will have to be met by non-market mechanisms, i.e. social housing where the development and/or the operation is subsidized by government bodies. Looking at the long term development of residential uses in the area, the Director of Planning believes it appropriate to (1) channel new development towards Oppenheimer Park and along Cordova Street where a better living environment now exists, and (2) introduce a floor space bonus system for housing in the Main-Hastings area where much of the area's existing housing is located, and where it is appropriate to have the larger buildings required for a bonus system to work effectively. It must be emphasized that it is readily apparent that a demand for market housing is not now very strong, if it exists at all. However, the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area, as well as the surrounding communities, are improving and it is important to provide for, and in fact encourage, new residential development in this Downtown Community, consistent with Council's overall Downtown policies.

With respect to existing housing and zoning by-law regulations, there is a need to alter the regulations to ensure more compatibility between the existing older building, whose units normally face onto a light well, and a new development built adjacent to it. A suitable setback is required to ensure adequate light and ventilation to the existing habitable rooms.

Policies

4.1.1 Appropriately located housing units capable of being economically renovated should be repaired to City standards, by strictly enforcing the Standards of Maintenance By-law, and using Federal and/or Provincial housing rehabilitation funds where possible.

4.1.2 New housing should be self-contained, and units being rehabilitated should be converted to self-contained units where physically and economically possible.

4.1.3 The annual target for social housing units in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area should be 600 units.

4.1.4 A density bonus system should be devised as an incentive for new housing development.

4.1.5 To ensure the affordability of housing for the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area population, the Federal and Provincial governments should be requested to continually monitor and improve their funding programs to reflect the actual costs of new construction, rehabilitation, and ongoing operating and maintenance costs, and to extend the benefits of shelter allowance schemes.

4.1.6 New developments locating adjacent to an existing residential building should be required to provide a suitable setback to ensure adequate light and ventilation to the existing habitable rooms.

4.1.7 No new Special Needs Residential Facilities should be permitted within the boundaries of the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area, as defined by this Plan.

Implementation

1. Instruct the Director of Planning to carry out Policies 4.1.4, 4.1.6, and 4.1.7 through amendments to the Zoning and Development By-law No. 3575.

2. Refer Policies 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3 and 4.1.5 to the Downtown Housing Implementation Committee to guide their development of projects and programs which affect the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer portion of the Downtown Core.

4.2 Commercial Uses

Discussion

Commercial uses in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area display distinct functional differences depending on their location within the area.

Hastings Street, from Carrall to Dunlevy, is primarily a retail area including convenience stores, restaurants, theatres and pubs at street level, with the upper floors being "transient hotel" rooms and housekeeping units. These so-called transient hotels actually function as residential rather than commercial use. The significant exceptions are the developments situated at the Main and Hastings intersection. The Ford Building, on the northwest corner, is an eight-nine storey office building. The newly-renovated and City-owned Carnegie Building, on the southwest corner, has offices, meeting rooms and recreation areas, and a library.. There are two large bank buildings on the northeast and southeast corners. This area functions as the core of skid road.

Hastings Street, from Dunlevy east to Heatley (and beyond), is a mixture of retail, retail-wholesale uses, gas stations, and some old single-family homes. Most of the buildings are one-storey; the upper floors of multi-storey buildings are hotel rooms and housekeeping units. This area functions as "general business area".

The 200 Block East Hastings.

Main Street, from Hastings to Alexander, is primarily institutional on the east side (Public Safety Building, Provincial Courts and a Ministry of Human Resources office now under construction). On the west side, the 200 and 300 blocks have retail and local convenience stores at street level, with one theatre and a pub. The upper floors of these buildings, though originally constructed as hotel rooms, are mostly vacant, with a few exceptions. The 100 block has a firehall, older multi-storey buildings coverted to offices, and the newer six-storey Police Union office building, which also contains the City's traffic courts. These uses, along with the institutions on the east side of the street, give this part of the area a "downtown" feel, with more worker than resident orientation.

Local shopping at the corner of Powell and Gore.

Powell Street has a wide range of street-level uses, including retail, restaurants and cafes, retail-wholesale and similar light industrial uses, social services, pubs, grocery and other convenience stores located in narrow storefronts. The major exceptions are the 200 block (south side), which is now a large surface parking lot, but is the site for the already approved seven-storey Provincial Remand Centre, the 400 block (south side) which contains Oppenheimer Park, and the southeast corner of Powell and Jackson which has the new Buddhist Church complex. The upper floors of the Powell Street buildings are mainly hotel rooms and housekeeping units. Powell Street functions as the area's local shopping street and outdoor socializing and meeting place. The 300 and 400 blocks contain a number of Japanese-Canadian retail establishments and form the core of the "Japanese Village" character area.

The foregoing discussion of commercial uses in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Area points out the following relevant characteristics. First, there are a variety of street level commercial uses throughout the area, most of them reasonably healthy, and nearly all of them important to the workers and residents of the area. Secondly, these uses tend to be grouped into a number of functional sub-areas. Thirdly, the upper floors of most multi-storey buildings are hotel rooms and housekeeping units.

In order to stabilize and strengthen the healthy existing commercial uses, and to facilitate the development of new desired uses, alterations to the land use controls are required to reinforce the existing functions of the various sub-areas.

There is, however, one exception to the conclusion regarding the reinforcement of the existing functions of the various sub-areas. This involves the desired future uses of the upper floors of buildings located on Hastings Street from Carrall to Heatley and on Main Street from Hastings to Alexander. As noted in the Housing section of this Plan, the Main-Hastings area should be developed more as a mixed use area, with both housing and also non-residential uses permitted on upper floors. With regard to the conversion of existing residential units to office or other commercial uses, however, this would be strongly discouraged. Replacement housing would be very costly in terms of tenant displacement, relocation costs, and the cost of development of new social housing replacement units. However, good opportunities may exist for the partial conversion of a building to commercial use coupled with the repair and rehabilitation of the total building, resulting in a more viable building for the owner and the retention of some if not all of the residential uses. Redevelopment of this nature should be considered on a case by case basis and measured against the overall intent of this Plan.

Policies

4.2.1 Retail and similar uses should be encouraged at street level, primarily on Hastings Street (from Carrall to Dunlevy), Main Street and Powell Street to promote pedestrian interest and activity.

4.2.2 Small scale convenience commercial uses should be encouraged on Powell Street to provide the day-to-day goods required by the resident population.

4.2.3 Japanese-Canadian retail and related commercial uses should be encouraged to locate on the 300 and 400 blocks of Powell Street.

4.2.4 Office and other commercial uses should be permitted on the upper floors of new development on Main and Hastings Streets; conversions of existing "transient hotels" to office and other commercial uses should be prohibited except where this is combined with the upgrading of a significant portion of the units for continued residential use as part of an overall renovation shceme.

4.2.5 Retail-wholesaling and related general business uses should be permitted on Hastings Street, from Dunlevy to Heatley.

Implementation

1. Instruct the Director of Planning to carry out all of the above policies through amendments to the Zoning and Development By-law.

4.3 Industrial Uses

Background

Discussion

Prior to 1975 the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area had been zoned for industrial and some commercial uses. The 1975 rezoning to Comprehensive Development District (CD-1) qualified the area for NIP by stabilizing the residential uses. This new zoning also constrained the options for continued industrial activity in this area. With respect to industrial uses, the CD-1 District Schedule permitted the following:

a) Industrial uses as listed under sections 1A and 2A of the (M-1) Industrial District Schedule (Light) and sections 1A and 2A of the (M-2) Industrial District Schedule (Heavy), provided that:

   i) These uses were established and operating prior to September 1975, and

   ii) These uses remained in their present location; expansion into adjacent lots was permitted if, in the opinion of the Director of Planning, the industrial use was compatible with nearby residential uses, and the expansion did not involve the demolition of residential units except by special permission of Council, and

   iii) Expansion and structural modifications of these uses was limited to development on sites used for the existing use only as defined by the subdivision in effect on September 1, 1975.

b) New wholesale businesses.

c) New warehouses (general).

Characteristics of Existing Industrial Uses

During the thirty years between the end of the Japanese settlement in the early forties and the 1975 rezoning, industrial uses had concentrated on Alexander Street and Powell Street, east of Jackson. However, the conversion of the predominantly residential/commercial neighbourhood to industrial uses was by no means thorough, as small pockets of residential uses remain in all the blocks of Alexander and Powell to this day, contributing to the Downtown-Eastside's unique mixed-use character.

There are approximately 70 industrial companies in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area, employing about 700 people. The industrial employment is split relatively evenly between metal fabrication, miscellaneous manufacturing, and wholesale and industrial services. Half of the industrial companies have existed for eight or more years and employ 60% of the industrial workers in the area. The industries are located in the area because of their proximity to the port, the central industrial area of the City (their markets), and the good supply of local labour. Some firms are involved in oriental food preparation and storage and enjoy close access to the retail food distribution centres of Powell and Pender Streets. Other industries such as machine shops, electrical products manufacturers and automotive vehicle repair shops, are essentially foot-loose and are located in the Downtown-Eastside partially, because of its inner-city location and partially because of the availability of small lots, which provide "incubator" space for industries just starting out.

Many existing industries are port-related.

While the majority of industries in the Downtown-Eastside operate in a manner that is compatible with other land uses, there exists a handful of industries whose noxious effects make them unsuitable for this mixed-use neighbourhood. This plan proposes that the noxious industries be designated non-conforming uses and be phased out or improved so that they become compatible.

The M-2 zoned area to the north of Alexander Street and east of Heatley Street, is fully developed with a variety of light and heavy industrial uses. North of the railway tracks, industrial uses tend to be large scale fish processing and port-related industries. Although these industries have not been included in this Plan, they do affect the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area both positively by providing employment opportunities and negatively in terms of fish processing odours and traffic generation.

These adjacent industrial areas are being examined as part of the current City Planning Department study of industry throughout Vancouver, co-ordinated with the Office of Economic Development's continuing research program, in order to promote their compatibility with the mixed-use nature of the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area.

Retention of Industry

In the past several years, City Council has expressed concern with the diminishing number of industrial jobs in the City and subsequent loss of employment for the blue-collar work force. There is a continuing trend toward the rezoning of inner-city industrial areas for non-industrial uses, particularly residential uses (eg. False Creek - 225 acres) which results in the loss of industrial employment opportunities for a large portion of the City's population.

If industrialists are to make the improvements that are necessary to improve the compatibility of their industrial plants, it is important that the current level of uncertainty about use be removed. To retain and improve industry, the City must also establish development controls that relate to environmental impact of a plant or operation.

The Downtown-Eastside has in the past provided space for starter industries and industries which require access to their urban markets, and has provided industrial jobs for the inner-city population. This plan proposes that the Downtown-Eastside continue this function on a modified scale, and in a manner that complements the other land uses.

Mixed Land Uses and Compatibility Characteristics

Traditional approaches to zoning have tended to separate land uses in order to minimize conflicts. While it is evident that the effects of industry, such as noise, environmental pollution, and truck traffic generation, do have some negative impact on any residential neighbourhood, in an area like the Downtown-Eastside, the scale and nature of most industrial operations make them not unsuitable to this mixed residential-commercial area. Moreover, in the past forty years, residents have become habituated to the existence of industrial and commercial uses in their neighbourhood and consider them to be an integral part of the environment.

This plan encourages the continuity of mixed uses in the Downtown-Eastside, while minimizing negative impacts through the designation of an industrial sub-area along Alexander Street and Powell Street east of Jackson, and by permitting only industries compatible with a residential environment.

Characteristics of industrial uses appropriate to the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area are:

a) Quiet, non polluting operation;
b) Small size;
c) Low traffic generation;
d) Conformity to the scale of existing nearby buildings; and
e) A high worker-to-floorspace ratio to take advantage of the good access to the area provided by public transit.

While the only new industries permitted by the existing CD-1 District Schedule were warehouses and wholesale businesses, this Plan acknowledges that perhaps many more uses could meet the criteria noted above, and should be permitted.

Expansion of Existing Industrial Uses

The Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer CD-1 By-law, enacted in November 1975, provides for the expansion and structural modification of all industries within the limits of their own legally-approved sites, and for the expansion of the industries that are compatible with residential uses, to adjacent lots throughout the neighbourhood.

This Plan limits industrial expansion to: (1) those uses which meet the criteria for being "appropriate" and (2) which are located within the designated industrial sub-area. These appropriate industries may expand within the limits of their own sites and may expand to adjacent lots. provided that in their expansion they continue to meet the criteria set out in this Plan.

While considering this Policy Plan City Council decided to include a recommendation from the Economic Development Officer that the designated industrial sub-area should provide more certainty for industrial uses. This would be done by listing more outright industrial uses similar to those in the City's M-1B Zoning District Schedule, but modified to suit the goals of this Plan.

Those industries located within the designated sub-area that do not meet the criteria for appropriate industry, and all industries located outside the designated sub-area would be considered non-conforming uses, and as such would be permitted to expand only in special circumstances as noted in the next section: Non-Conforming Uses and Buildings.

Policies

4.3.1 Industrial uses appropriate for the Downtown-Eastside should be small, quiet, non polluting, worker intensive and low traffic generators; the form of development should be in scale with adjacent and nearby buildings.

4.3.2 New appropriate industrial uses and buildings should be encouraged to locate in a designated industrial sub-area, and they should be discouraged from locating elsewhere in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area.

4.3.3 Existing appropriate industries should be permitted to make additions and structural modifications, and expand to adjacent lots if they are located in the designated industrial sub-area and continued to meet the criteria for appropriate industrial use.

Implementation

1. Instruct the Director of Planning to carry out policies 4.3.1, 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 through amendments to the Zoning and Development By-law, and policies to provide more certainty for industrial uses in the designated industrial sub-area.

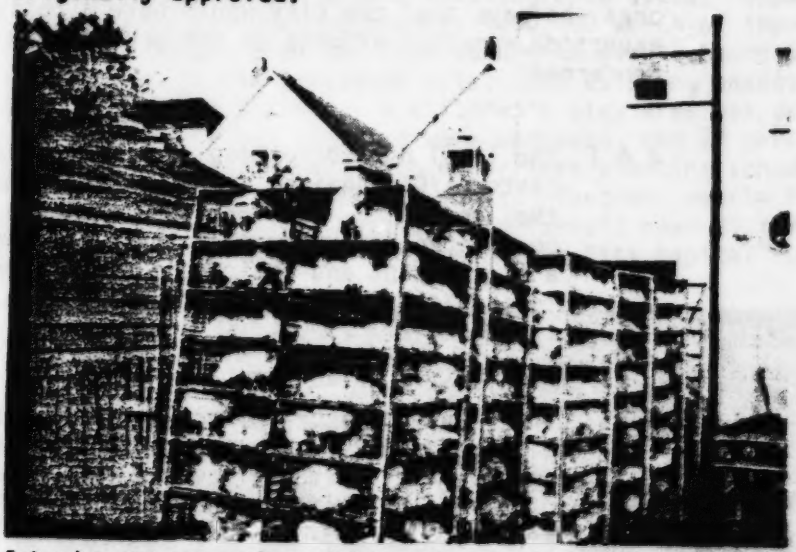
2. Instruct the Economic Development Manager to open discussions with owners and operators of existing industrial operations in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area with a view to persuading them to improve the compatibility of their operations in the area.

4.4 Non-Conforming Uses and Buildings

Discussion

There are many uses and buildings which were developed under the pre-1975 industrial and commercial zoning which remain in operation today. They continue to take advantage of their central location and accessibility to their markets. Some of these uses and buildings would become non-conforming with the adoption of zoning amendments recommended in this Plan.

As a general rule, non-conforming uses and buildings in this area, as in all areas of the City, are intended to be phased out in the long term. Implicit in an area-wide zoning is that the existing uses and/or buildings which are not permitted in the new zoning should be replaced eventually by new uses and buildings which conform to City Council's revised development objectives. However, all legal non-conforming uses and buildings can continue to exist as originally approved.



Extensive measures may be needed to assist some existing industries in their efforts to become more compatible with adjacent and surrounding development.

The owner of a non-conforming use or building who wishes to make additions or other structural alterations must first obtain the approval of the Board of Variance if the non-conformity is in respect of use, and the approval of the Director of Planning, if the non-conformity is in respect of regulations only.

It may be desirable in some cases to permit a modest expansion of a non-conforming use and/or building, if the owner demonstrates that the expansion is required to effectively and economically make the use or building more compatible with adjacent and surrounding development. In some other

cases, the owner may need to expand in order to continue the viability of the firm or operation, and can show that relocation costs would cause undue hardships. Each application for expansion of non-conforming uses or buildings in these or similar situations should be considered on its own merits and in relation to the overall intent of this Plan. In all cases, however, any alteration or expansion permitted should result in a significant and noticeable increase in compatibility, and this should be made a condition of the approval by either the Board of Variance or the Director of Planning, as appropriate.

The Economic Development Manager advises that it is more than likely that most if not all of the more "noxious" firms will move or close outright of their own volition, following the well established pattern of industrial dynamics. However, we should, he notes, open a dialogue with those "noxious" firms that seem to possess long-term viability, with a view to persuading them to upgrade the overall quality of their operations. The Office of Economic Development, he states, might be able to provide some liaison services in this regard. If uncertainties as to zoning and land use were removed, and firms were given some formal assurances as to their "claim" to exist in the area, he says that the City would have a better case in expecting remedial efforts on the part of the firms concerned.

Policies

4.4.1 The legal non-conforming uses and buildings in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area should eventually be phased out in the long term. However, they could be permitted to expand or be altered, provided that the resulting overall development is a significant and noticeable improvement in compatibility with the adjacent uses and surrounding area.

4.4.2 Owners and operators of non-conforming uses and buildings should be encouraged to improve the compatibility of their development, consistent with operational efficiency and viability of their operation.

Implementation

1. Instruct the Economic Development Manager to open discussions with owners and operators of non-conforming uses and buildings in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area, with a view to persuading them to improve the compatibility of their operation in the area.

4.5 Public Open Space and Views

Discussion

Response to open space and outdoor recreational needs should not be viewed in strictly an "acres per thousand people" standard, but rather should recognize the social habits of all residents and users, and accentuate the humanistic qualities in the area.

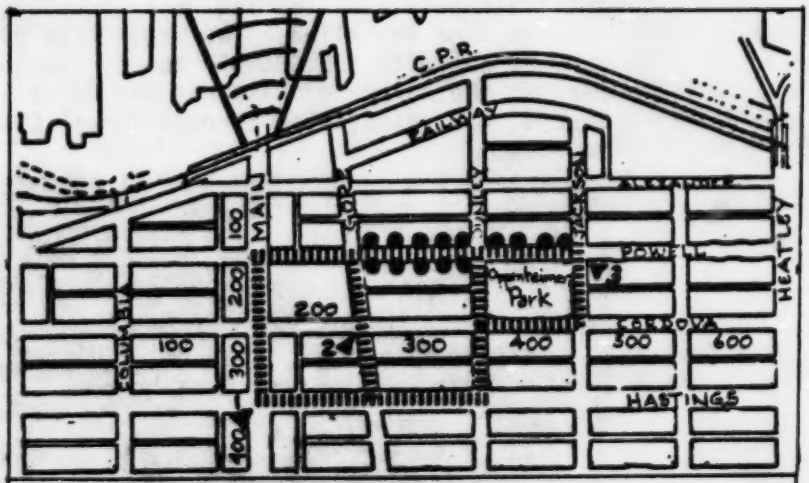
The Social Profile in the introductory sections of this Plan noted that most of the residents are single, elderly and low-income. These people enjoy walking as one of their primary outdoor recreational activities. They want and need places that are sheltered and relatively quiet, places which are good for visiting friends or sitting and talking, eating, playing table games such as cards, chess, checkers, dominoes or Ma Jong, and reading books. Though many of these activities are done indoors, they are also frequently carried on outdoors by residents who seek a social and physical outlet from their small hotel/rooming house rooms.

The City, through the Neighbourhood Improvement Program, has upgraded some of the area's existing open space. Oppenheimer Park has received approximately $130,000 worth of improvements. A senior adults area was developed with giant checkerboards, shuffleboards and horseshoe pits. The existing baseball field was graded and drained. A children's play area was developed, the fieldhouse and lighting were upgraded, and 27 park benches were installed. Two major tree planting schemes were carried out with $36,000 NIP funds. Further, nearby Pigeon Park at the corner of Hastings and Carrall near Victory Square, was reinstalled through normal City capital funding sources.

Oppenheimer Park today, after N.I.P. upgrading.

The north end of Main Street, which is now developed with the CN Pier, represents the area's most important view/open space opportunity. The Central Waterfront Official Development Plan, which includes this site, recognizes this opportunity and states that this location should accommodate a viewing area with a panoramic view potential westward towards the entire Central Waterfront. The planning analysis in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Area supports this conclusion.

With regard to future development of public open space, major new parks do not appear to be required. However, given the needs and habits of area residents and workers in the area, existing walkways, mainly sidewalks, should be improved, and increased where possible for landscaped and sitting areas. Opportunities for improvements along these lines appear to exist in linking the major social-recreational facilities, such as the new Carnegie Centre and Oppenheimer Park, through tree planting, landscaping, expanded boulevards, pedestrian lighting and mini-parks. This system should be co-ordinated with the proposed beautification scheme for the Japanese Village project on Powell Street. The accompanying map illustrates some of these possibilities.



DOWNTOWN-EASTSIDE/OPPENHEIMER
Proposed Public Open Space Development

Walkway
Japanese Village
View Preservation

▲1 Carnegie Centre Mini-park
▲2 Firehall No. 2 Mini-park
▲3 Japanese Buddhist Church Mini-park

Because this area contains only Oppenheimer Park as a major public open space, the programming of activities in the park is highly important. Normal staffing by the Park Board for Oppenheimer Park, as well as for neighbourhood parks in other areas of the City, is to place recreation workers in the Park for six weeks in the summer. However, in view of the needs and habits of area residents and their very high usage of Oppenheimer Park, there appears to be a need to re-evaluate the programming of staff for this particular park, and to consider extending their assignment for a longer period. The Director of Social Planning advises that it may be worth considering the possibility that recreation staff at the Carnegie Centre include programming of Oppenheimer Park as an additional responsibility. This would ensure co-ordination of programs between the Carnegie Centre and Oppenheimer Park, and give responsibility for programming in the Park to staff located in and familiar with the area.

Policies

4.5.1 Public open space/view opportunities should be upgraded, primarily for the use of area residents and workers. Recently-upgraded Oppenheimer Park should continue to receive a high level of maintenance in recognition of its role as the major open space in the area, and a new walkway system should be developed which links the major social-recreational centres of activity.

4.5.2 Open space/view opportunity, accessible to the general public, should be ensured in any future development of the CN Pier/foot of Main Street area.

4.5.3 The level of recreation staffing for Oppenheimer Park should respond to the particular requirements of the diverse area population.

Implementation

1. Instruct the Director of Planning to work with Engineering and Park Board staff to determine and report back within one year on the feasibility, costs and source of funds for an extended walkway system as described in this Plan.

2. Instruct the Park Board, in consultation with the Director of Social Planning, to reconsider the staffing level of recreation workers for Oppenheimer Park in light of the concerns expressed in this Plan.

4.6 Community Services and Facilities

Health Care Services

Discussion

The Report on Health Status of Census Tracts 57, 58 and 59 prepared by Dr. Rita Bakan found startling evidence that the health needs of the Downtown-Eastside population are not being adequately met by the present system of health care services. The area population has an extremely high rate of premature deaths from respiratory diseases resulting from a lack of early medical treatment and factors such as malnutrition, poor housing and alcoholism. Females in the area die at an average age that is much lower than that for males (55 years for females and 65 years for males) and substantially lower than for females in Vancouver (72 years). This indicates that women, although constituting a minority of the population, are much more vulnerable to the hazards produced by their environment and require health services designed to specifically focus on their health problems. The Downtown-Eastside population as a whole exhibits rates of heart and circulatory disease, respiratory disease and suicide that are four times the rates for Vancouver.

These health indicators demonstrate that a population which is aging, poor, malnourished and inadequately housed requires a health care system that recognizes the effects of harsh environmental factors and seeks to respond to people's needs in a wholistic, not a fragmented manner.

The Downtown Community Health Clinic located at 373 East Cordova Street has provided a medical/dental service for the residents of the Downtown-Eastside for several years in a cramped and inadequate space.

On September 25, 1979 City Council approved the allocation of $330,000 NIP funds for the construction of the clinic portion of a new clinic/residential building at 412-420 East Cordova Street. The new clinic will offer medical/dental and homemaker services with an emphasis on preventative health. Currently under construction, the new clinic is expected to open in 1981.

Model of the new Downtown-Eastside Community Health Clinic and 67 units of social housing.

Alcoholism is highly visible in the Downtown-Eastside. Estimates of the number of chronic alcoholics range from 350 to 500 according to community health and social service workers. Alcoholism is known to be detrimental to the physical and mental health of the individual and carries costs associated with police, medical and social services. Among community and health workers, there is a lack of consensus about alcohol treatment, some favouring compulsory programs, while the majority favours some form of voluntary treatment, combined with rehabilitation and job training.

Comments of the Medical Health Officer of Vancouver

The Health Department supports the health-related recommendations which appear in Section 4.6 Community Services and Facilities. In particular, it supports goals dealing with the provision of preventive Health Care and Treatment Services and with Policies 4.6.1 and 4.6.2.

Policy 4.6.3 suggests that "comprehensive alcohol treatment and rehabilitation programs should be developed in consultation with neighborhood health, police and social service workers". The Health Department has some concerns about this policy particularly with its implementation.

Our schizophrenic approach to the problem, which involves both the treatment and concurrent promotion of alcoholism is one of the most complex and difficult medical/social/political issues facing our society today. The former Minister of Health recently announced a major reorganization of the Alcohol and Drug Commission of B. C. which would divest the current Commission of its responsibilities

for program and service delivery while retaining its responsibilities for policy development. A new service delivery arm, headed by an Executive Director, will be charged with implementing programs.

It is unwise for the Health Department to begin developing an alcohol treatment program at this time. We suggest that we report back to Council on the potential implications of recent Provincial developments in alcohol and drug policy.

Policies

4.6.1 The delivery of health services by clinics and private practioners should be a co-ordinated effort that emphasizes a preventative health approach, and is supplemented by outreach and home visiting services in order to identify and treat the high risk population.

4.6.2 Health services should be designed that specifically focus on the health problems and needs of women in the Downtown-Eastside.

4.6.3 Comprehensive alcohol treatment and rehabilitation programs should be developed in consultation with neighbourhood health, police and social service workers.

Implementation

1. Request the City Medical Health Officer to report to Council on the potential implications of the recent Provincial developments in alcohol and drug policy for the City of Vancouver in general, and the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area in particular, such report to include recommendations for Council actions in light of these developments.

2. Request the Medical Health Officer to report back on specific actions and programs designed to carry out Policies 4.6.2.

Public Safety

Discussion

The Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area is an inner-city neighbourhood with a high proportion of liquor establishments and a high crime rate, particularly crimes against persons. Residents, merchants and community workers maintain that it is not safe to walk on the streets at night for fear of being mugged. Victims of muggers tend to be elderly, infirm and frequently inebriated. According to the police, only 50% of mugging occurs in the street; the remainder happens in hotel rooms and in pubs. Violence against persons in the Downtown-Eastside is often associated with alcohol, occurring either in the context of liquor establishments where the victim becomes too inebriated to resist a mugger, or in connection with bootleggers where a customer on his way to make a purchase will be mugged and relieved of his cash.

Realizing the intimate connection between alcohol and violence, the team police currently conduct a nightly foot patrol through all the liquor establishments in the neighbourhood, checking for offences against liquor laws and providing a visible presence in the neighbourhood. Their ability to deal with bootleggers, however, is hampered by the amount of manpower required to stake out and arrest a bootlegger and the low fines that are the penalty for bootlegging.

The Government Liquor Store, 200 Block East Hastings Street.

Residents and social service workers agree that the liquor store on Hastings Street at Main Street provides a focus for the alcohol dependent population and as such is a blight on the neighbourhood. However, opinions as to the solution to this problem range from outright closure to an improvement in operations. The Liquor Distribution Branch has responded recently to criticism of its operations by initiating a study of its role in the area, and a series of meetings with police and social service workers. For some time now, the liquor store has been monitored by the Social Planning Department in consultation with Police and the Liquor Distribution Branch. The Director of Social Planning reports regularly to Council on the effectiveness of current measures to alleviate these problems.

City Council, as part of the discussion of this Policy Plan, decided to request that the Liquor Administration Branch close the liquor store at 230 East Hastings Street for six months and that the impact on the surrounding area be monitored.

The Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area is a downtown neighbourhood that has more than its fair share of establishments serving and selling alcoholic beverages. There are 12 hotels and pubs in the area with a high concentration on Hastings Street between Carrall and Main Street. There is a consensus among area residents and neighbourhood workers that the further availability of alcohol should be curtailed and that no new pub and hotel

Police foot patrols along Hastings Street.

type liquor licenses should be issued in the area. However, the moratorium on liquor licenses should not apply to restaurants and cafes. The Police advise that the current liquor laws relating to the serving of alcohol are adequate, but could certainly be enforced better. They, however, suggest that the laws should be enforced primarily by the provincial inspectors, not the City police.

A concern expressed by residents is that although the police station is physically located within the neighbourhood, calls to the police for assistance too often result in a slow or inattentive response. Part of the difficulty lies with the dispatching system which ranks incoming calls not by area but by type of problem. The police advise that this system applies throughout the City. However, the perception by many residents is that the police have an attitude toward the area which often discounts their concerns and the urgency of their complaints because they are viewed as residents of "skid road" and therefore do not merit as much attention. Whatever the facts of the matter may be, it is apparent that closer communication needs to occur between the police and local residents.

During a discussion of this part of the Policy Plan, City Council expressed concern over the payment of Ministry of Human Resources cheques on a monthly basis as it creates total chaos in the area for three days after government cheques are received. They requested the Ministry to pay social assistance twice a month ensuring that one cheque is sufficient to cover the recipient's rent.

Policies

4.6.4 The team policing concept should be extended to ensure foot patrols on the streets, particularly during evening hours, to reduce the incidence of street crime.

4.6.5 Fines for bootlegging should be raised sufficiently to provide a true penalty and deterrent.

4.6.6 Liquor laws concerned with the serving or selling of alcoholic beverages to inebriated persons should be strictly enforced. Establishments that break the law should be closed down.

4.6.7 No new liquor establishments requiring hotel (Class A), cabaret (Class C), or neighbourhood pub (Class D) licenses should be permitted in the Downtown-Eastside/ Oppenheimer area.

4.6.8 Improved communication between Downtown-Eastside/ Oppenheimer area residents and police should be encouraged through educational programs and greater community liaison.

Implementation

1. Request that the Liquor Administration Branch close the liquor store at 230 East Hastings Street for six months and that the impact on the surrounding area be monitored.

2. Request the Provincial Liquor Licensing Branch to take more of a lead in policing pub license violations in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area, and further to withhold the issuance of new hotel, cabaret or pub licences.

3. Instruct the Police Department to consider extending the team policing in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area and developing programs which foster better police/community relations, and to report back to Council on this matter, including consideration of any staff or other resource needs.

4. Request the Attorney General to increase the penalties for bootlegging infractions and enforcement of liquor hours with consistent repeaters being dealt with in a harsher manner.

5. Request the Minister of Human Resources to pay social assistance twice a month ensuring that one cheque is sufficient to cover the recipient's rent.

Recreation Services

Discussion

A 1976 study by the Social Planning Department, entitled Activity Preference and Facilities Inventory Study: Gastown, Chinatown, Downtown-Eastside and Strathcona noted that most residents regularly participated in visiting friends or sitting and talking with people, playing table games, reading books, going to movies, listening to the radio and watching television.

The newly-refurbished Carnegie Centre provides a reading lounge and library, social lounge, multi-purpose arts space, auditorium/gymnasium, exercise room, child care area, games room and a learning centre with four classrooms.

Since the majority of residents of the Downtown-Eastside live in single rooms in hotels and rooming houses, they have no place to socialize or entertain guests and tend to do their socializing in beer parlours. In recent years, this situation has been improved by the development of recreational facilities and programs in Oppenheimer Park, in the Carnegie Library and at The "44". The Federal, Provincial and City governments have contributed toward improved recreational facilities by granting NIP funds for the Buddhist Temple Gymnasium and for the renovation of the Japanese Language School.

Although these facilities now provide alternatives to beer parlours, they do not meet some of the needs of a large proportion of the population because of conflicts over their use between age or sex groups. Younger men have tended to patronize facilities such as The "44" and Oppenheimer Park, to such an extent that older men are intimidated and stop using the facilities. Similarly, women tend to avoid those recreational facilities that are heavily patronized by men.

Recreation services and facilities must be designed with a sensitivity towards these age and sex differences. For the elderly and for women, who feel most secure within their own hotel, efforts should be made to provide a common recreational space in each hotel or rooming house, where residents could meet for conversation or quiet recreation.

Since a large proportion of the resident population is Chinese speaking, encouragement should be given to recreational programming that takes Chinese culture and language into consideration. Recognition should also be given to the recreational needs of the increasing number of Native Indians who use the area.

The Director of Social Planning is currently assessing the social and recreational programs offered at the Carnegie Centre, The "44" and the several Downtown-Eastside drop-in centres also operating in the area, for a report to Council on this matter.

Policies

4.6.9 Recreational programming should continue to be oriented to specific groups within the population including women, the elderly, the Chinese and Native Indians.

4.6.10 Recreational space and facilities appropriate to the habits, characteristics and desires of residents should be included in any new or rehabilitated residential development.

Implementation

1. Instruct the Director of Planning to carry out Policy 4.6.10 by introducing a bonus provision for recreational space and facilities as an amendment to the Zoning and Development By-law.

Institutions/Social Service Agencies

Discussion

The Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area, a 21-block neighbourhood with a small and declining population (2,192 - 1976 Census), has a disproportionate number of institutions, social service agencies and public authority uses. There are currently over 20 institutional uses in the area, plus two new Human Resources offices under construction. Six public authority uses dominate the Main/Cordova/Powell area, with the Provincial Court House and the Remand Centre (approved but not yet constructed) occupying an entire city block.

The Court House and Public Safety Building on Main Street.

There is a concern on the part of the residents and users of the area, that the neighbourhood is fast becoming dominated by institutional uses, many of which do not strictly serve the area population. The Remand Centre and the Alcohol and Drug Treatment Facility are examples of institutions that either do not serve the local residents or are oriented toward a much larger population.

While many definitions of what constitutes an institutional use exist in the community, for the purpose of this plan, an institutional use can be defined as:

1. A treatment facility for the alcoholic, drug dependent or psychiatrically disturbed;

2. A lock-up facility or any of its ancillary uses;

3. A public authority use that does not primarily serve the neighbourhood resident population.

This definition does not include "residential institutions", or Special Needs Residential Facilities. These facilities are dealt with in the Housing section of this Plan (see pg. 19).

In any discussion of institutional uses locating in the Downtown-Eastside, the points made are that land is cheaply and readily available, and that the institutional use does serve an often ambiguously defined Downtown population. However, every parcel of available land thus used to serve a larger population, is lost to the neighbourhood for its own local needs.

While this Plan cannot solve the question of what is institutional need, it does suggest that every new proposal for an institutional use be carefully evaluated to ensure that the use serves a clearly defined need of the resident population.

Policies

4.6.11 Only those institutional and public authority uses which serve an obvious and clearly defined need of the neighbourhood resident population should be permitted.

Implementation

1. Instruct the Director of Planning to carry out Policy 4.6.11 through amendments to the Zoning and Development By-law.

4.7 Traffic, Transportation and Parking

Discussion

The Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area street system includes part of the main east-west commuter route between Downtown and the suburbs to the east and north (via the Second Narrows Bridge).

The area is severely congested during the day, especially during rush hours and on weekends. Hastings Street, for example, carried about 24,000 vehicle trips per day; the combined vehicle trips for Powell Street (25,000 trips westbound) and East Cordova Street (27,000 trips eastbound) makes this corridor one of the three most heavily used in the City. Pedestrian activity is also very intense during these periods. The heavy volume of traffic, with its associated noise and air pollution, makes the area relatively unsafe and unpleasant for all users, including the many residents. It is recognized that this pattern is not likely to improve, and in fact, will get worse if corrective action is not taken.

East Cordova Street traffic at noon on a weekday.

This area has one of the highest ratios of transit users in the City. This factor, coupled with the proposal for a Victory Square Light Rapid Transit Station, point to a need to ensure that every effort is made to facilitate continued high transit usage. More bus shelters are one of a number of actions which could assist in this regard.

On-street parking is permitted throughout the area, with meters on sections of Powell and Cordova near Main Street where major institutions and retail area are located. This on-street parking is needed and well used since many of the buildings are very old and deficient in on-site parking by today's standards. The City has taken some action in the adjacent Gastown and Chinatown Historic Area. A new civic garage is being constructed at Columbia and Cordova, and a temporary (5 years with 5-year renewable option) parking lot is being developed on a City-leased site near Columbia and Keefer. There are, however, some pressures to increase the public parking supply in this area, which raises the questions of how much parking should reasonably be provided in an area with very good transit service and if more parking should be added, where?

Clearly there is a need for a comprehensive analysis of these interrelated issues, and of the variety of possible solutions. This analysis should be done from both the larger perspective of the overall traffic and circulation issues facing the Downtown and adjacent central areas, and also from the local neighbourhood point of view. This study should produce a traffic control plan which concentrates on ways to reduce the negative effects of through traffic, transit improvements (including the possible extension of the Freebus), and reducing the conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. Commuter traffic should be discouraged, while the already high level of transit usage should be increased if possible. Long-term, commuter parking should be discouraged.

Solutions to the traffic, transportation and parking issues facing the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area will be difficult to develop, and some of the problems may be impossible to resolve in the short term. Many of thepossible solutions many be very costly in terms of dollars and disruption of other areas . . . and for those reasons may be unworkable. The City Engineer advises that "the proposed traffic and parking study would deal with only incremental changes to this essentially fully-developed area, and that it is not reasonable to expect that traffic volumes would be reduced." However, this Plan recognizes the need to be comprehensive about the approach to solutions, and identifies the desire to relate all actions to the protection and enhancement of the local neighbourhood.

Policies

4.7.1 Seek a reduction in the negative effects of through traffic, primarily on Hastings, Powell and Cordova Streets.

4.7.2 Maintain existing arterial street widths, and relate street improvements to improved efficiency of the public transit system or pedestrian safety as part of an overall traffic control plan.

4.7.3 Promote the use of public transit by providing bus shelters at all appropriate bus stops.

4.7.4 Discourage commuter parking by reducing the parking requirement for new developments in the Main/Hastings area, so that the new requirement is consistent with Council's revised regulations for the Downtown area.

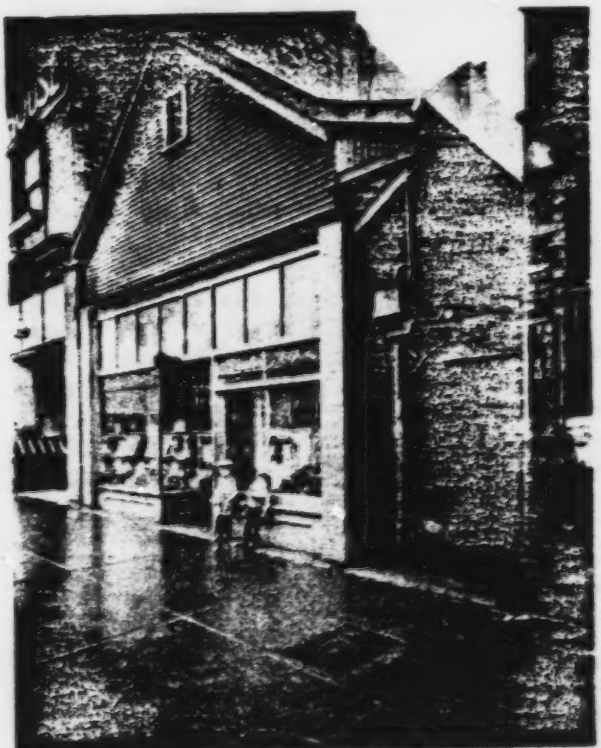
Implementation

1. Instruct the City Engineer in consultation with the Director of Planning to carry out a comprehensive traffic, transportation and parking study, including consideration of the local environmental impacts, in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area, and to prepare a Traffic Control Plan based on the goals and policies contained in this Policy Plan, including recommendations for any local improvements if required, for report back in 18 months.

4.8 Japanese - Canadian Community

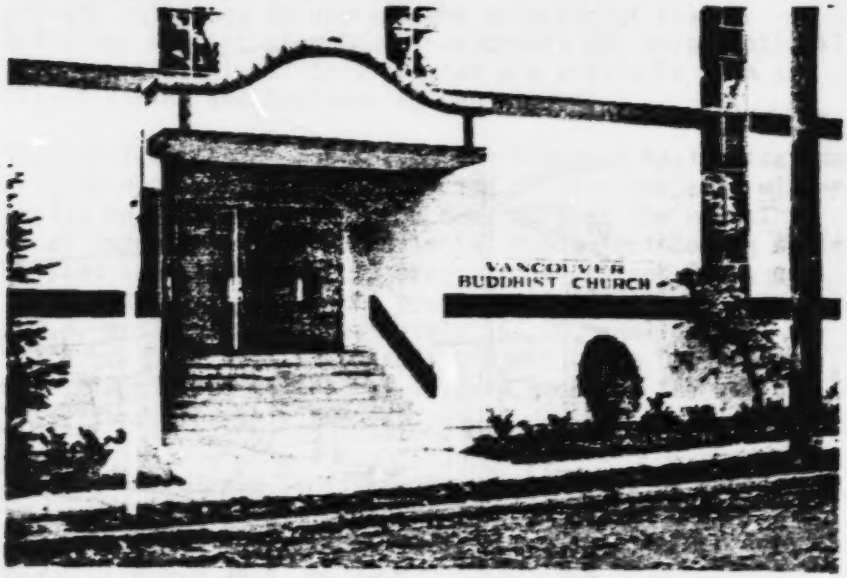
Discussion

The Oppenheimer Area has historical significance to the Japanese-Canadian community. It was the first area in Vancouver in which Japanese immigrants settled. Since then, in terms of residences, the population has dispersed throughout the City and Region. However, to a large extent, the area has remained the hub of the Japanese-Canadian community, even after the evacuation of the early 1940's and resettlement in the 1950's. To a large extent, the educational, cultural, traditional and religious functions are still held in the Buddhist Church/Gymnasium Complex at Jackson and Powell Streets and at the Japanese Language School on Alexander Street. To a lesser extent, social and recreational activities are held in the area. And the shops, stores and restaurants along Powell Street only hint at the strength and vitality of the pre-war Japanese-Canadian community. To a great many elderly citizens of the Japanese-Canadian community the Oppenheimer area is viewed with a fair degree of sentiment and loyalty. The regular shopping trip to Powell Street is more than a shopping trip, it is an opportunity to meet and socialize informally. Recently the community established its first and only Japanese-operated senior citizens home on Powell Street.



Japanese Store on Powell Street, 1928
(Photo: Vancouver Public Library).

In 1978 Buddhist Church members opted to rebuild a new Church complex on their present site. The new complex cost over $800,000, with the Neighbourhood Improvement Program contributing $100,000 to assist with the gymnasium portion of the development. Also in 1978, the Japanese-Language School was renovated. The NIP program contributed $50,000 of the total of $71,000 for the project. In order to provide for community access to both these facilities, a legal agreement was drawn up between the City and the societies who manage these facilities.



The Japanese Buddhist Church/Gymnasium complex on Jackson Street.

During the fall of 1979 and the early part of 1980, a number of meetings took place between the City, various Japanese-Canadian organizations, and the merchants and owners along Powell Street. The purpose of these meetings was to determine support for a possible upgrading of a portion of Powell Street with a Japanese theme, partially to recognize the important historic and cultural contributions of Japanese-Canadians in the Oppenheimer Area, and partially to provide an impetus for the revival of the commercial retail-restaurants aspect for Japanese-Canadians, tourists and others.

The consensus of these meetings was that the City, in co-operation with the Japanese-Canadian organizations, and merchants and property owners, should carry out a modest beautification scheme in the 300 and 400 blocks of Powell Street. Concept designs have already been endorsed. The proposed scheme would include basic sidewalk repair/ replacement with Japanese-theme decorative treatment near the curb, lantern-style pedestrian lighting, Japanese banners, street signs, and some plantings (with replacement of some of the existing street trees as required). The drawing on the opposite page illustrates this concept.

This endorsement of the beautification scheme by the Japanese-Canadian organizations and merchants and property owners was contingent upon the City placing a moratorium on the approval of new institutional uses (as defined in this Plan) in the area. Those who attended the meetings insisted that the viability of thw whole area depended on this moratorium, and that the potential viability of a Japanese Village demanded such a moratorium. This Plan acknowledges and concurs with this viewpoint (see also pg. 21).

Sketch showing possible "Japanese Village" beautification of 300 - 400 Blocks of Powell Street.

The merchants and property owners who attended the meetings also expressed an interest in upgrading their storefronts and building facades, with a Japanese theme if appropriate. They indicated this may be financially feasible as business activity increases as a result of the proposed beautification scheme.

The conclusion to be drawn here, then, is that there is a good opportunity for a co-operative public and private investment in the Powell Street commercial area to achieve some very worthwhile goals.

The City has already initiated action. On October 21, 1980 Council adopted staff recommendations which outlined a proposal for the City to make use of the newly-created Downtown Revitalization Program, a financial assistance program of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The Powell Street/Japantown area was one of four areas requested for "Special Area" designation, which, if the Province concurs, would qualify the area for special grants and loans for promotion and organization activities, financing of public works, and assistance to owners of private buildings to upgrade the exterior of their buildings as part of a Council-approved design/promotional scheme. (Details of this program are available from the City Planning and Engineering Departments.)

The application for funds from the Downtown Revitalization Program notwithstanding, financing of this project, either wholly or partially, could be done through the normal Local Improvement. Any Provincial funds forthcoming could be used to reduce costs to property owners and City, or to expand the scope of the project. In addition, the N.I.P. program has approximately $64,000 unallocated, which could be applied to this project. The Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee has already endorsed the use of these funds for this purpose.

Policies

4.8.1 The Japanese-Canadian community should be encouraged and assisted in their efforts to retain their historic identification with the Oppenheimer Area.

4.8.2 The streetscape of the 300 and 400 blocks Powell Street should be upgraded with a Japanese theme to reinforce the core of the "Japanese Village".

Implementation

1. Instruct the Director of Planning and the City Engineer to:

   a) Proceed further with detailed design plans for a streetscape beautification/upgrading project on the 300 and 400 blocks of Powell Street;

   b) Report back, upon completion of the design work, on possible sharing of the capital costs, anticipated maintenance costs, responsibility for maintenance costs, the Local Improvement Procedure to be followed, and senior government assistance available.

4.9 Heritage Conservation

Discussion

The height of the development period in the Oppenheimer area occurred between 1900 and 1930, when the majority of the existing structures were built. In spite of the primarily industrial redevelopment of portions of the area during the 50's and 60's, many buildings and some enclaves of buildings of historic or heritage character remain to this day.

In recognition of the historical importance of the buildings in this area, City Council has designated five structures as heritage buildings.

1. The National Harbours Board building at 50 Dunlevy Street was built in 1905 by the British Columbia Mills, Timber and Trading Company as part of the Hastings Sawmill operation, which at the turn of the century employed 350 men, and was equipped with the most modern equipment including "incandescent electric lamps". This building was designated for its historic association with the Port of Vancouver.

2. St. James Church, 303 E. Cordova Street, was built in 1935-37 by the Anglican parish on the site of its former church which had been erected in 1887. The church was designated because it is the oldest Anglican Parish Church in the City and because it has an innovative radiant heating system.

St. James Church, a designated heritage building.

3. St. Luke's Home at 309 E. Cordova Street was built in 1924, to replace an original structure built in 1888 as the City's first hospital and training school for nurses. Sister Frances, the founder of the hospital, was an important figure in the early history of British Columbia, who also founded other hospitals in Mission and Chilliwack. This building was designated for its historical significance as well as its association with an important City pioneer.

4. Fire Hall #2, 270 East Cordova Street, was built in 1907 (on the site of Fire Hall #1), with Rennaissance arches to accommodate five fire trucks, four of which were horse-drawn and one was motor driven. The firehall has the distinction of having housed the first mechanized fire department in North America. Designed by William Whiteway, a major Vancouver architect of the period, the building is in the Rennaissance Revival Style. This building was designated for its architectural and historical significance.

5. Coroner's Court, 240 East Cordova Street, a graceful Georgian revival brick building, was built in 1932 to house the first coroner's office, whose function was to scientifically investigate unnatural deaths. This building was designated primarily for its architectural significance.

In addition to these designated heritage buildings, the Oppenheimer area contains several other buildings that are considered to be of heritage merit due to their historical association or unique architectural quality. The New World Hotel (built in 1912) at 390 Powell Street is both architecturally pleasing and significant for its association with a prominent Japanese-Canadian businessman, S. Tamura. Diagonally across the street, at 401 Powell, stands the Marr Hotel (formerly the Second House and Imperial Hotel) built in 1889, a significant building in the pioneer period of the neighbourhood.

The Orange Hall at 289 East Hastings Street was built in 1904 as a meeting hall and offices for the Northern Irish Orange Lodge. During World War II, the upper floors were converted to residential units by the National Housing Administration. The Sailors Home at 500 Alexander Street, built circa 1900, is significant for its association with Vancouver's early port history, as a home-away-from-home for sailors from around the world.

Sailor's Home, 500 Alexander Street, 1914
(Photo: Vancouver Public Library).

Aside from significant individual buildings, the historical character of the Oppenheimer area is evident in clusters of buildings that uniquely express the social and economic life of the community in the dynamic phase of its development. The Boomtown Buildings at 423 and 427 Powell Street with their false fronts and shiplap wooden siding were built in the 1880's as retail/residential buildings and constitute the only surviving examples of "wild west" architecture. It should be noted that the owners of 427 Powell, showed remarkable sensitivity to the historical context, when they demolished the building and rebuilt it with an identical "boomtown" facade in 1975. Another historical cluster occurs just outside the area in the 300 block Railway where four brick warehouses, built between 1909 and 1920 create an early industrial enclave. Finally, a significant and intact residential enclave of turn-of-the-century wood frame houses occurs on both sides of the 600 block East Cordova Street.

Much of the historic quality of the Oppenheimer area today is due to the retention of significant individual buildings and clusters of typical buildings of its formative period, in spite of redevelopment activity of recent years. While it is not feasible to preserve all of the noteworthy buildings in the area because of their often poor building condition due to age, and demands for redevelopment in a neighbourhood with few vacant lots, nevertheless every effort should be made to preserve those buildings that can be economically retained and to adapt the design of new development to include important design elements of the buildings being replaced or of adjacent significant buildings.

To further this effort, City Council on December 11, 1979 passed By-law #5304, known as Zoning Discretion for Heritage Structures which permits the Development Permit Board or the Director of Planning to grant relaxation of regulations where literal enforcement would not allow the restoration or renovation of sites with architectural, historical or cultural merit.

Nearby Carnegie Public Library, at the corner of Main and Hastings.

This Plan proposes a Registry of specific buildings and groups of buildings having heritage merit, with the intent of preserving and encouraging renovation of these buildings. The buildings listed above should be assessed by the Heritage Advisory Committee, and evaluated for their eligibility for relaxation under By-law #5304. The Registry of buildings would function as a guide to the Development Permit Board in the exercise of its discretion in any development permit application involving a listed building or group of buildings.

In the case of a listed group of buildings it should be noted that the heritage value lies in the maintenance of the integrity of the grouping. Where a proposal involves the demolition of a building in a listed group, consideration should be given to the varying degrees of value lost, depending on location in the group. For example, in the case of a three building grouping, the demolition of an end building results in a relatively minor loss of value, whereas demolition of the centre building results in a major loss. Where demolitions or redevelopment significantly compromise the integrity of the grouping, the remaining building or buildings should be removed from the registered list.

Policies

4.9.1 The retention and renovation of the following buildings or groups of buildings, having architectural, historical or cultural merit, should be encouraged.

- New World Hotel, 390 Powell Street
- Marr Hotel, 401 Powell Street
- Orange Hall, 289 East Hastings Street
- Sailor's Home, 500 Alexander Street
- Boomtown Buildings: 423 Powell Street
  427 Powell Street
  433 Powell Street
- Turn-of-the-century houses - 600 block East Cordova Street.

4.9.2 New development should respect the scale, rhythm and materials of adjacent and nearby heritage merit buildings.

Implementation

1. Refer Policy 4.9.1 to the Vancouver Heritage Advisory Committee for their consideration.

2. Request the Development Permit Board to review and consider the heritage aspects in any development permit application that would involve the demolition or major alteration of any registered building or groups of buildings in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area with the intent of encouraging renovation and retention.

4.10 Community Involvement

Discussion

The intensive phase of the Downtown-Eastside Neighbourhood Improvement Program will be complete with the adoption of this Plan by City Council. However, there will be a continuing need to monitor land use changes and to assess the effectiveness of this Plan in meeting its goals. There are a number of capital projects identified in this Plan, i.e. the Powell Street beautification scheme, the walkway/ open space system, and social housing site acquisition and development. All of these steps in carrying out this Plan should be done with local consultation.

The Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee will be disbanding now that the NIP program is completed. However, Powell Street merchants and property owners, and members of the Japanese-Canadian community, will continue to meet with staff on the proposed beautification project. The Downtown-Eastside Residents Association (DERA) continues to monitor social and physical changes in the area, publicize those changes, and appear before Council to lobby for improvements. Also the changes in land use will occur through the Development Permit Board process which includes, in most cases, notification by a sign posted on the site of the proposed development and notification letters to nearby property owners, and in all cases, the application is considered at a meeting held in public by the Development Permit Board. However, in addition to these opportunities for public involvement, there should be public meetings to discuss other significant changes proposed for the area.

Policies

4.10.1 Continue liaison with the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area community on planning and development matters through notification and public information meetings as part of the Development Permit Board process. With regard to the implementation of the capital projects referred to in this Plan, public meetings should be held to discuss the detailed proposals.

Implementation

1. Instruct the Director of Planning to include the Development Permit Board process as part of the other proposed amendments to the Zoning and Development By-law No. 3575 intended to carry out the land use policies in this Plan.

2. Instruct all other civic departments to ensure that adequate information is provided to the local community on all proposed capital projects, and that public meetings are held to obtain local citizen input for these proposals.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation statements in the body of the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan are instructions to City departments and requests to other levels of government to take action on the policies.

The implementation of policies relating to land use and development will require changing the existing zoning to an Official Development Plan which provides a framework for development decision-making that permits greater citizen involvement, while recognizing the significance of the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area in the City context. A companion document to the Official Development Plan necessary to guide development of specific sites will be the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Design Guidelines (under preparation at this time).

While some implementation statements have stated or implied time targets for completion, many of the statements have no deadlines but are meant to influence and guide public and private decisions affecting the area.

The implementation statements that require the expenditure of capital funds should be considered in the annual Supplementary Capital Budget review and in future Five-Year Plans.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL
ON PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
OCTOBER 18, 1979

ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL
ON OCTOBER 30, 1979

4. Policies and Procedures for Controlling the Development of Residential Facilities for the Handicapped, the Elderly and Others with Special Needs

The Committee considered a report of the City Manager dated September 19, 1979 (on file in the City Clerk's Office), in which the Director of Social Planning states that in January, 1979, he advised Council he would be undertaking a review of present guidelines governing locations of Community Residential and Community Care Facilities in the City.

The report states in part:

"As a result of this review, two major problem areas have been identified:

a) The Definitions of special residential Uses in the Zoning and Development By-law; and

b) The present locational guideline pertaining to Community Residential Facilities."

It is proposed to use definitions which are mutually exclusive and taken together will be inclusive enough to cover all uses permitted, as well as proposing that terminology used by the City be the same as that used by the Province.

New locational guidelines are proposed that would set minimum distances or buffer zones between special needs residential facilities.

Mr. D. Purdy, Social Planning Department, provided a map indicating the location of 188 community facilities of various kinds. Members of the Committee felt that the location of day care centres, including those in private homes, should be shown on the map as well. Mr. Purdy advised that this would be done.

RECOMMENDED

A. THAT the Director of Planning make application to amend the Zoning and Development By-law N. 3575 in accordance with the following:

1. The term "Personal Care Home" be deleted from Section 2 (Definitions) and Section 11.9.1 of the Zoning and Development by-law.

2. The conditional use category "Special Needs Residential Facility" be substituted for the uses, "Community Residential Facility" and "Personal Care Home" wherever they appear in the Zoning and Development By-law and that "Special Needs Residential Facility" be defined as:

   (a) a Community Care Facility, which means a residential facility as defined in the Community Care Facilities Licensing Act, as amended; or

   (b) a Child Welfare Facility, which means any facility other than a Community Care Facility providing a group living arrangement for more than five children in the care of the Superintendent of Child Welfare; or

   (c) a Group Living Facility, which means a facility other than a Community Care Facility, for more than five physically disabled, mentally retarded or psychiatrically disabled persons with drug or alcohol problems or persons who are under the legal custody of the Crown or persons with other living problems, and which provides lodging and food and is developed for the rehabilitation of its residents through self-help or through professional care, guidance or supervision.

3. "Special Needs Residential Facilites" shall be conditional approval uses in the Zoning and Development By-law where "Personal Care Homes" and "Community Residential Facilities" have been conditional approval uses.

4. The term "Boarding House" be redefined in Section 2 of the Zoning and Development By-law to read "means a rooming house where meals are provided for the persons living therein, but does not include a Special Needs Residential Facility".

5. The term "Rooming House" be redefined in Section 2 of the By-law to read "means a building containing not more than 15 rooms used as sleeping units where lodging for three or more persons is provided, but does not include a Special Needs Residential Facility".

6. The term "Institution of a Religious, Philanthropic or Charitable Character" be defined in Section 2 of the By-law so as to exclude a facility that fits into the Special Needs Residential Facility categories.

and that the whole matter be referred to Public Hearing.

B. THAT the guideline adopted by Council on October 6, 1976, providing that "Community residential facilities should not constitute more than 10% of the population within a two (2) block radius", be rescinded.

C. THAT subject to the adoption of the proposed amendments at Public Hearing, the following guidelines be adopted and made available to the public under the title, "Guidelines for the Development of Special Needs Residential Facilities". These guidelines would assist the Director of Planning when dealing with Development Permit Applications for such uses:

(i) In general, a Child Welfare Facility or Group Living Facility must be of a capacity deemed by the Director of Planning, after consultation with the Director of Social Planning, to be compatible with the character of the neighbourhood in which it will be located. In all RS and RT districts, a capacity of 10 will be considered the acceptable upper limit, although higher capacities may be justified in particular cases.

(ii) For Special Needs Residential Facilities intended to house persons with behavioural problems which may be disruptive to the neighbourhood, more restrictive limitations may be placed on capacity and location in relation to other facilities.

(iii) Applicants are advised that Special Needs Residential Facilities proposing to accommodate more than 10 residents are classified under the Building By-law as Institutional Uses and, as such, are subject to more stringent requirements than Residential Uses (10 or fewer residents). An architect or design professional should be consulted to determine the implications of the Building By-law requirements.

(iv) In a predominantly residential area, a Special Needs Residential Facility must be spaced at least 600 feet from another Special Needs Residential Facility. Depending on the number of residents, exclusive of staff, in either the proposed or existing facility, whichever has the greater capacity, for each resident more than six (6), another 100 feet in distance shall be added up to a distance of 2,000 feet. Any Special Needs Residential Facility with a capacity of 20 or more people shall be located at least 2,000 feet from the nearest other Special Needs Residential Facility. Exceptions to this rule may be made:

(a) where one facility operates as an annex to another, provided that the two facilities together are compatible with the neighbourhood; or

(b) for Community Care Facilities.

(v) Special Needs Residential Facilities for short term residents, including crisis shelters and reception centres for persons awaiting placement in more permanent homes, will be discouraged from locating in the midst of established residential areas, where permanent, long-term residency is the normal pattern of community life. Preferred locations shall be in commercial or mixed commercial/residential areas or on the fringes of residential areas.

(vi) In determining the suitability of a location for Special Needs Residential Facility, its relationship with other uses and community facilities in a neighbourhood shall be considered.

(vii) In all cases, neighbouring residents who could be affected, as determined by the Director of Planning, shall be notified of Development Permit applications for Special Needs Residential Facilities and be given opportunities to express their views in writing before permits are granted or refused.

(viii) In cases where there is concern that a Special Needs Residential Facility may prove disruptive to a neighbourhood, development permits may be granted for limited periods of time, with the understanding that permits to continue use may be granted as long as operations prove compatible with neighbourhood life.

(ix) Applicants for Special Needs Residential Facilities may be required to name a neighbourhood liaison person to whom neighbourhood residents can refer for exchange of information and expression of concern regarding the facility, both while an application for a development permit is being considered and, if a permit is granted, while the facility is in operation.

(x) Applicants desiring Long Term Care funding or requiring Community Care Facilites licensing must contact the Medical Health Officer prior to applying for the Development Permit.

(xi) Applicants are advised to consult with Social Planning Department staff and Planning Department staff prior to filing their Development Permit application for a Special Needs Residential Facility. The Social Planning Department maintains an inventory of existing facilities and a map showing their locations. This information will help applicants to determine whether a particular location is suitable.

(xii) Applicants may only commence operations at the proposed facility when necessary Permits and Licenses have been approved and all requirements fulfilled.

Appendix II

DOWNTOWN-EASTSIDE/OPPENHEIMER POLICY PLAN

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL ON PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES JANUARY 15, 1981

ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL ON FEBRUARY 13, 1981

1. Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan

The Committees considered a report of the City Manager's dated January 6, 1981 forwarding:

a. Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan - January 1981

b. Draft Schedule A - Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Official Development Plan - January 1981

(Copies on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. D. Cornego, Senior Planner, brought a visual presentation, outlining the history of the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area noting that the area was designated a Neighbourhood Improvement Program (N.I.P.) area in the Fall of 1975. In November 1975, Council rezoned the N.I.P. area from a predominantly industrial and commercial district to a comprehensive development district as an interim measure. As part of the N.I.P., and in close consultation with the local community, civic staff were to identify and analyze the whole range of issues affecting the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area and prepare policies for Council approval. A revised zoning by-law was also to be prepared, which would carry out the new land use policies.

The purpose of this report is to present for Council approval the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan.

Through ongoing discussion with the Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee and other local citizens and citizen groups, the following issues were identified for the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area:

- The land use conflicts arising from the diversity of land uses located in very close proximity;
- The deteriorating existing housing stock;
- The negative impacts of high volume traffic flowing through the area;
- Deficiencies in social and recreational services;
- Deficiencies in public open space;

- Proliferation of non-local public institutional uses;

- Close connection between liquor abuse and street crime;

- Desire to enhance existing local identity Japanese-Canadian social and commercial community;

- Recognition and conservation of heritage character of local buildings and streetscape.

A set of goals were established to form the basis for the planning and development of the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area. These goals address the area's social, physical, historical and economic issues as an interacting system, and are intended to provide a direction for change, and a context within which both public and private decisions can be made.

A number of specific policies were prepared to carry out the more general goals.

Both the goals and policies are the main components of the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan. While they are stated and described in the Policy Plan document, they are also consolidated for easy reference in Appendix I (copy attached).

The intent of the Policy Plan is to further stabilize the residential uses in the area and to continue the community upgrading effort begun with the Neighbourhood Improvement Program and its companion Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program. The Plan is also intended to provide for a more compatible mixture of land uses and buildings, primarily through the emphasis of sub-areas as the basis for new zoning and development controls.

Some of the main features of the Policy Plan are:

- An emphasis on the provision of new, self-contained housing units, and a re-affirmation of Council's existing policies to rehabilitate existing units by strict enforcement of the Standards of Maintenance By-law and using Federal or Provincial housing funds, through the work of Council's Downtown Housing Implementation Committee (DHIC):

- A prohibition on the development of new Special Needs Residential Facilities and new institutional uses which do not serve an obvious and clearly-defined need of the local resident population;

- The permitting of new offices in the Main-Hastings area as a principal use, coupled with a density bonus system for housing to be incorporated as part of the total development, similar to the development guidelines for much of the Downtown District;

- The permitting of new compatible industrial uses, subject to performance and location criteria;

- A walkway/mini-park system linking the major social-recreational activity centres;

- Firmer measures to deal with the alcohol abuse - street violence problem;

- The preparation of a Traffic Control Plan designed to reduce the negative effects of through traffic and commuter parking;

- The revitalization of the Japantown-Powell Street commercial area;

- A proposed registry of significant buildings and groups of buildings having heritage merit.

The Policy Plan includes implementation statements (consolidated) for easy reference in Appendix I), some of which would be implemented over a number of years and others which would require specific projects or studies to be carried out, with reports back to Council for action.

The report notes:

"With specific reference to the housing policies, the Director of Planning points out that policy 4.1.3 reaffirms Council's existing policy of an annual target of 100 new social housing units for the Downtown Core and amends it slightly to indicate that the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area should be a high priority location for those units. Council may wish to re-consider this annual target in light of the December 12 announcement by the Hon. Paul Cosgrove, Minister responsible for C.M.H.C., that he had approved an additional 800 social housing units for Vancouver, over and above the 892 approved earlier last year.

Many of the policies refer to land use and development. Their implementation would require amendment to the Zoning and Development By-law No. 3575. A draft Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Official Development Plan has been prepared, which recognizes the significance of this area as part of the Central Area and includes the Development Permit Board decision-making process which permits greater citizen involvement than more traditional district schedules do. Appendix II (copy attached) contains a comparison between the main elements of the existing zonings (DD and CD-1) and the draft Official Development Plan. A comparison document, necessary to guide the discretion of the Development Permit Board, will be the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Design Guidelines which is under preparation at this time."

Various civic departments and agencies (Engineering, Health, Social Planning, Carnegie Centre, Park Board, Economic Development Office, Police, Civic Buildings and Law) participated in the planning process and in the final preparation of both the Policy Plan and Official Development Plan.

The Medical Health Officer recommends that with respect to Health Care Services, the implementation statement requesting Ministries and City officials to develop a comprehensive alcohol treatment program in the area be amended to City Medical Health Officer report to Council on potential implications of the recent Provincial developments in alcohol and drug policies, including recommendations for Council action.

The majority of the members of the Committees agreed that more outright industrial uses should be listed in Sub-area 4.

A lengthy discussion followed with respect to alcohol related problems in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area:

- There is total chaos in the area for three days after government cheques are received. Perhaps something could be written into the Policy Plan requesting the Provincial Government to consider issuing cheques twice a month, one cheque being sufficient to cover the cost of the person's rent.

- The Provincial legislation should be changed to provide for stiffer fines for bootlegging and liquor hour enforcement in licensed premises, with consistent repeaters dealt with in a harsher manner. Insp. H. Starek advised that the Department has requested an increase in penalties on a number of occasions as well as requesting more liquor board inspectors to monitor and control premises.

- An alderman advised that the City has received a petition containing 4,000 names requesting closure of the liquor store at 200 East Hastings. The Chairman of the Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee advised that the Committee recommended a temporary closure of the liquor store and a monitoring of the impact this would have on the area. The citizens' committee does not agree with the present policy that City officials report to Council on periodic evaluations of the liquor store operation.

The Council members agreed that the plan should be amended to provide for this temporary closure.

As well as alcohol related problems, the members of Council discussed the target for social housing units. As mentioned, the policy plan re-affirms Council's existing policy of an annual target of 100 new social housing units for the Downtown Core. With the 800 additional social housing units approved for Vancouver, the members of Council agreed that the policy plan should be amended to reflect an annual target of 600 social housing units in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area.

Mr. J. Baker, Solicitor, on behalf of the Wing Wing Co. requested that food manufacturing be listed as a use in Sub-area 1.

The Committee

RECOMMENDED:

A. THAT the Policies and Implementation Statements contained in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan be amended to reflect the following:

i) that to provide certainty of use in Sub-area 4 more outright industrial uses should be listed, similar to the B-1B Schedule modified to suit the goals outlined in the Policy Plan;

ii) that the Liquor Administration Branch be requested to close the liquor store at 230 East Hastings Street for six months and the impacts on the surrounding area be monitored;

iii) that the Minister of Human Resources be requested to pay social assistance twice a month, ensuring that one cheque is sufficient to cover the recipient's rent;

iv) that the Attorney General be requested to increase the penalties for bootlegging infractions and enforcement of liquor hours, with consistent repeaters being dealt with in a harsher manner;

v) that the annual target for social housing units in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area be amended to 600 units;

vi) that the Implementation Statement #1 with respect to Health Care Services be amended to read:

"Request the City Medical Health Officer to report to Council on the potential implications of the recent Provincial developments in alcohol and drug policies for the City of Vancouver in general and the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer area in particular; such report to include recommendations for Council actions in light of these developments."

B. THAT the Goals and Policies set out in the Downtown-Eastside/ Oppenheimer Policy Plan as amended, be adopted.

C. THAT the Director of Planning be instructed to submit the draft Official Development Plan, as amended, directly to Public Hearing.

D THAT the Implementation Statements contained in the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan be referred to various appropriate civic departments and boards for action as specified, including requests to senior governments for action on certain of the implementation statements.

Appendix III

DOWNTOWN-EASTSIDE/OPPENHEIMER
OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF
CITY COUNCIL, PUBLIC HEARING,
OCTOBER 1, 1981

APPROVED THAT

This Public Hearing be adjourned and Council defer decision pending further reports from staff on the uses in the areas, definition of hotels, developers providing housing for area residents displaced, restrict 'offices-only' developments in Sub-Area 1.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF
CITY COUNCIL, JANUARY 5, 1982

APPROVED THAT

Special Needs Residential Facilities not be permitted under the proposed Official Development Plan. However, the Development Permit Board be advised that Council favours the issuance of a development permit for the Special Needs Residential Facility proposed by St. James Social Services under the present CD-1 by-law;

FURTHER THAT preference be given, where possible, to accommodating residents of the area in this facility.

The Official Development Plan be amended to delete hotels from permitted uses.

The Official Development Plan for Sub-Area 1 (Main/Hastings) be amended to

(i) prohibit conversion of existing hotels and residential uses to office or other commercial uses.

(ii) permit new offices to be constructed on a bonus system providing that at least 50% of upper storeys is residential.

The Official Development Plan be amended to permit any redevelopment (including residential construction of more than four units, non-residential construction and conversion of sleeping rooms or housekeeping units to self-contained units) above 1.0 F.S.R. provided that at least 20% of its units (or floor space, if non-residential) are for social housing - to be purchased by a government or non-profit housing group using available CMHC funding for social housing.

The application by the Director of Planning to rezone the Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Area from Comprehensive Development District and Downtown District (DD) to Downtown Eastside/Oppenheimer District (DEOD) with an accompanying Official Development Plan be approved as amended this day;

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services bring forward the appropriate by-law.